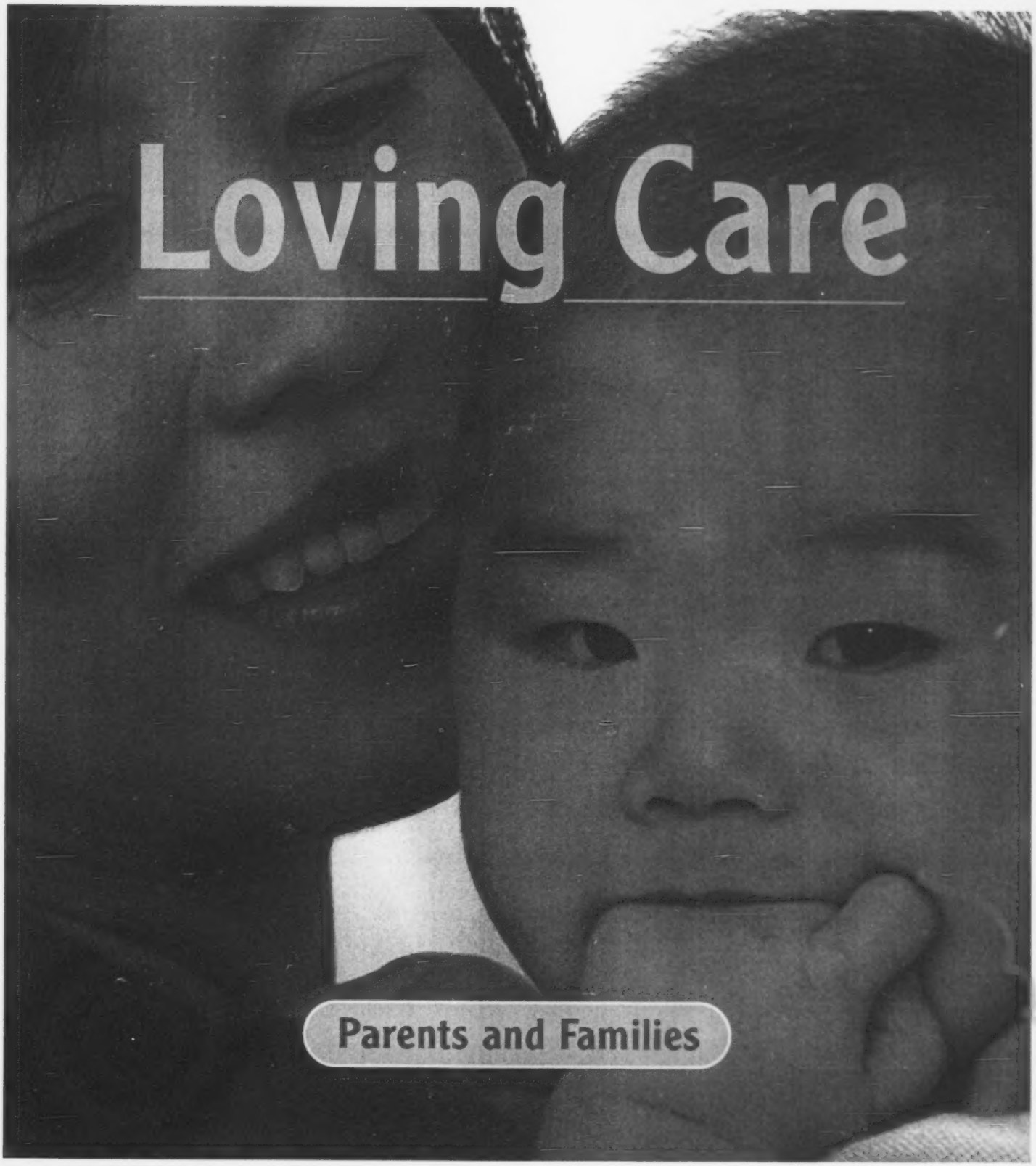
Loving Care
Parents and Families

Loving Care: Parents and Families

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The information in this booklet is up-to-date as of the date of printing. This information is not a substitute for the advice of a health professional.

Loving Care: Parents and Families was developed by the Parent Health Education Resource Working Group:

- Jennifer Macdonald, (Co-Chair), Provincial Health Educator, Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection
- Kathy Inkpen (Co-chair), Family Health Coordinator, Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection
- Bonnie Anderson, Public Health Nutritionist, Capital District Health Authority
- Susan DeWolf, Family Support Worker, Extra Support for Parents Volunteer Service
- Natasha Horne, Community Program Coordinator, Dartmouth Family Centre
- Sherry MacDonald, Public Health Nurse, Guysborough/Antigonish/Strait & Cape Breton District Health Authorities
- Vicki MacLean, Public Health Nurse, Colchester/East Hants & Pictou County District Health Authorities
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- Tina Swinamer, Early Childhood Nutrition Coordinator, Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection
- Shelley Wilson, Public Health Nutritionist, Southwest Nova District Health Authority

Writing: Janis Wood Catano, Easy-to-Read Writing
Photography: Shirley Robb, Communications Nova Scotia
Design: Derek Sarty, GaynorSarty

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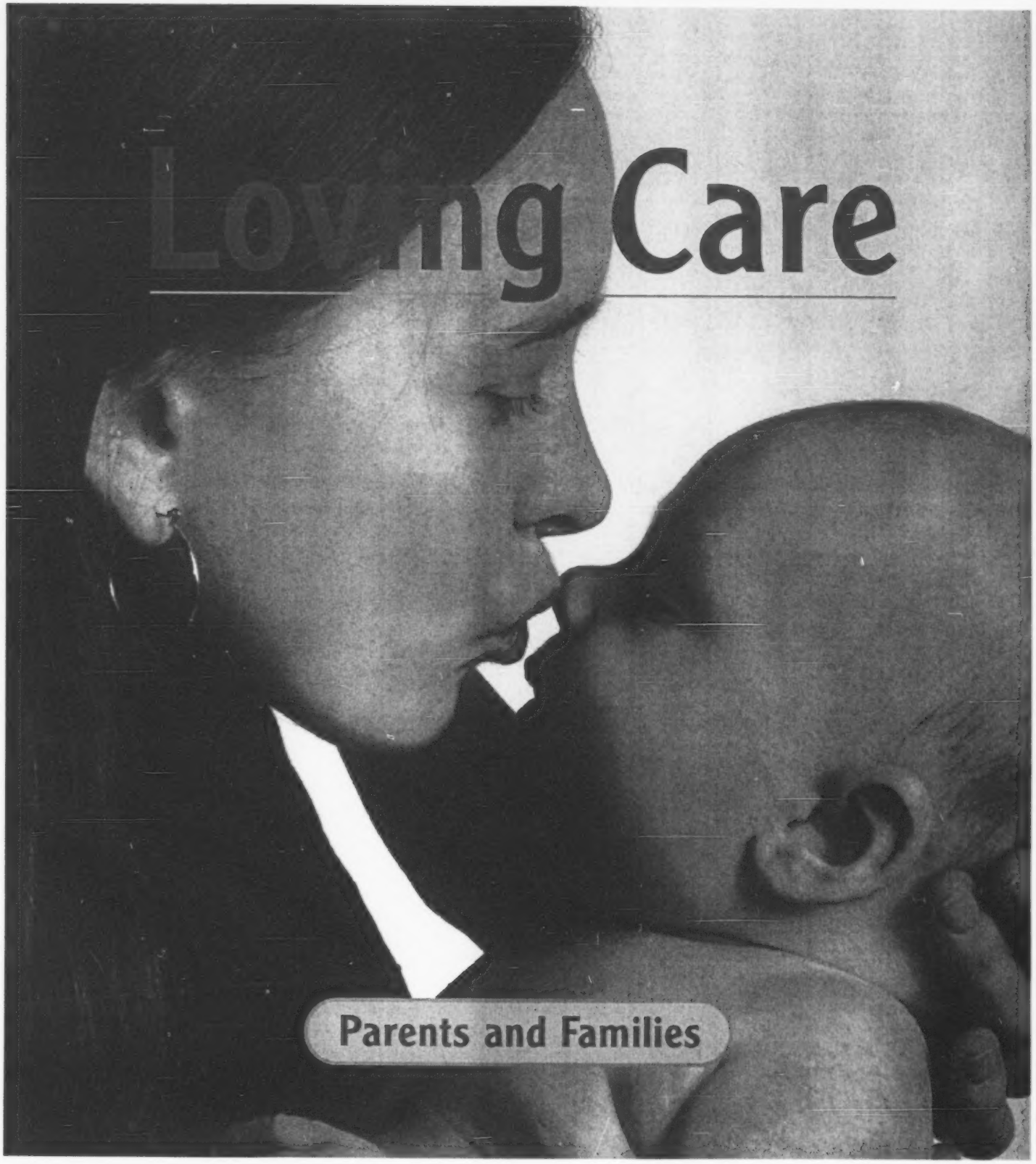
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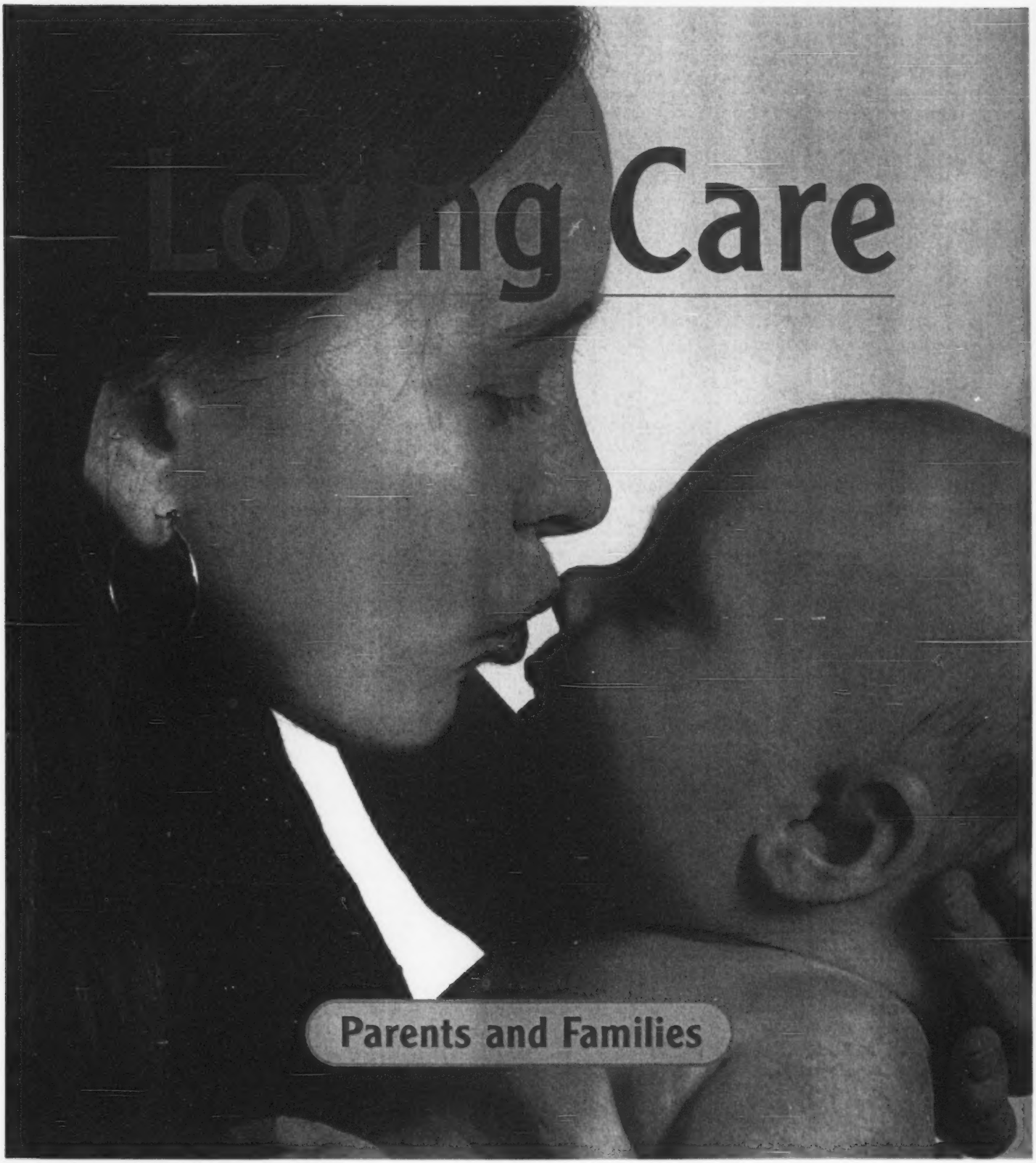
Loving Care
Parents and Families

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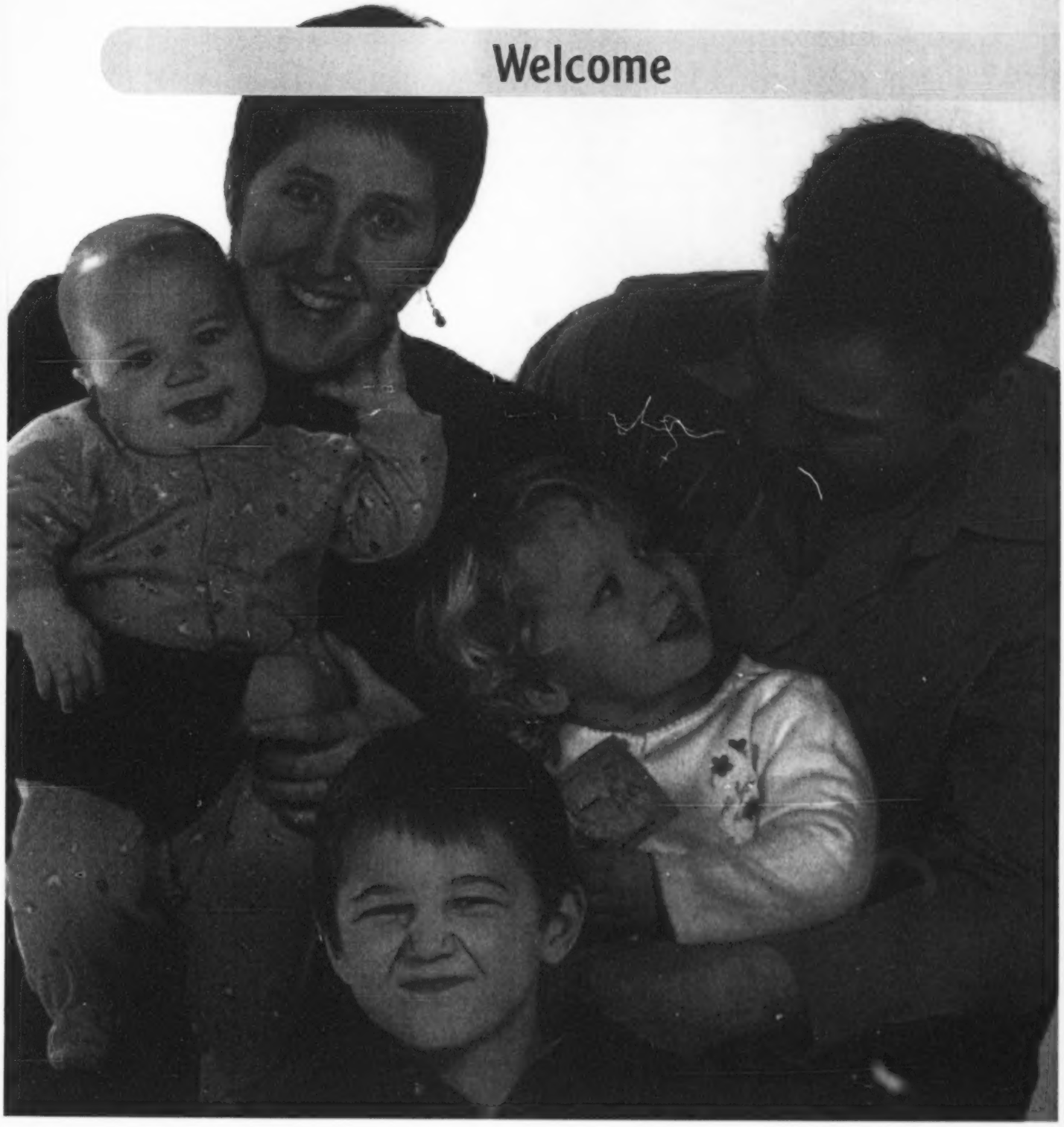
Welcome



Introduction

A new baby creates other new lives—a new mother, a new father, new sisters and brothers, new grandparents. All of you will be getting used to new roles and new ways of looking at yourselves and each other.

The birth of a baby changes individuals or couples into a family. It takes time, patience, and love for a new family to take shape and settle into a new life together.

As you give loving care to your new baby, don't forget to save a little for yourself and the rest of your family.

This book offers information to help parents meet their own physical, mental, and emotional needs. It also gives some information on helping children and grandparents welcome their new family member. We hope that it will help you to make your own decisions about what's best for you and your family.

Take care of yourself! Your baby, your family, and all of your relationships depend on your health and well-being.

Added info...

We've written ***Loving Care*** for the parents of healthy, full-term babies.

If your baby is premature or has health problems or special needs, you can get the specific information you need from your health care providers.

How we decided what to put in these booklets

There's so much that parents want to know! We couldn't include it all. When we wrote this series of booklets, we had to decide what to put in and what to leave out.

We chose the information we used based on:

- **Best practices**—ways of doing things that we've learned work well
- **Research**—results of studies into how to promote the health of infants and young children and help them to grow and develop
- **National and provincial government policies, strategies, and key messages**
- **Interviews** with parents from family resource centres across the province

There are things you won't find in these booklets. For example, we don't give you detailed directions for how to do things like give a bath or change a diaper. These are things we know you'll figure out on your own. We've tried to focus on information that will help you understand your baby so you can respond to her needs and help her grow and develop.

Some of what you read here may sound different from what you heard growing up. It may be different from what your parents did when they were raising you.

Everything in these booklets is here to help you give your baby the best possible start in life.

Support for families

It's normal for parents to want to talk to someone about their baby and their feelings.

We all need the help and support of the people around us. These are called our "social support networks."

Your social support network is made up of the people that you can depend on in good times and bad. It can include:

- Family and friends
- Elders
- Other parents
- Community and faith-based counselors

Many parents find that other parents are one of their best sources of support. You can connect with other parents through family resource centres, play groups, playgrounds, coffee shops, malls, libraries, parks, and other places where parents meet one another. You may feel shy about talking to someone you don't know, but try it. Other parents are probably as eager to talk as you are.

In most communities, there are programs and support for parents. These are often free of charge and all parents are welcome.

To find out what's happening in your community:

- Check bulletin boards, newspapers, and libraries.
- Ask your public health nurse, outreach worker, home visitor, or other parents.

Added info...

Besides being a good place to meet other parents, Family Resource Centres offer many different programs for parents and kids. These include parent education, family counseling and support, children's programs, literacy programs, health and nutrition programs, and employment support.

Family Resource Centres welcome all members of the community.

Health services

If something about your baby doesn't seem right to you, trust your instinct.

You know your baby better than anyone else.

If you're worried, look for help from health services in your community.

There are many people who can help. Keep trying until you find the help you and your baby need. It may take time, effort, and many phone calls.

When looking for help:

- **Think about the problem.**

  The more clearly you can describe the problem and the kind of help you need, the better chance you'll have of finding it.

- **Start with people and organizations you know.**

  Ask for suggestions from other parents, people in your support network, your doctor, public health nurse, or social worker—anyone you can think of. Organizations like a family resource centre, church, friendship centre, or community centre may also have good ideas.

- **Keep a list of everyone you talk to.**

  Write down the names and numbers of everyone you call and what they say. Use a scribbler or a notebook so you won't lose your list.

- **Ask for suggestions from the people you contact.**

  If the person you call can't help, ask them to suggest other places to try.

- **Look for support if you have issues that make it harder to get the information or care you need.**

  Finding the care you need for your baby can be stressful at the best of times. It can be even more difficult if you have problems with language, culture, or reading.

  - *If you have problems understanding English or French*, ask for a translator. Many hospitals and clinics offer this service.
  - *If you come from a different culture*, some hospitals and clinics offer cultural health interpreters. Ask how you can get this service.
  - *If you don't read well*, ask the health care provider to explain any printed information or directions to you. Or ask for material that's easier to read. It's okay to say, "I don't understand this."

  Consider taking someone you trust with you to appointments if you are concerned that you might not understand everything that's going on.

Keep trying! You and your baby are worth the effort it takes to get the help you need.

Added info...

In this book we use the term "health care provider" to mean any of a number of professionals who can help parents and families. These include:

- Dentists
- Dental hygienists
- Doctors
- Midwives
- Nurses
- Nurse practitioners
- Pharmacists
- Psychologists
- Public health nurses
- Public health nutritionists
- Registered dietitians
- Registered social workers

Added info...

There are no stupid questions!

If you are concerned about your baby, don't be afraid to ask questions. You have a right to information about your baby's health.

You have a right to ask questions of anyone who has a role in your child's care.

Keep asking questions until you get an answer that you understand.

You can never ask too many questions!

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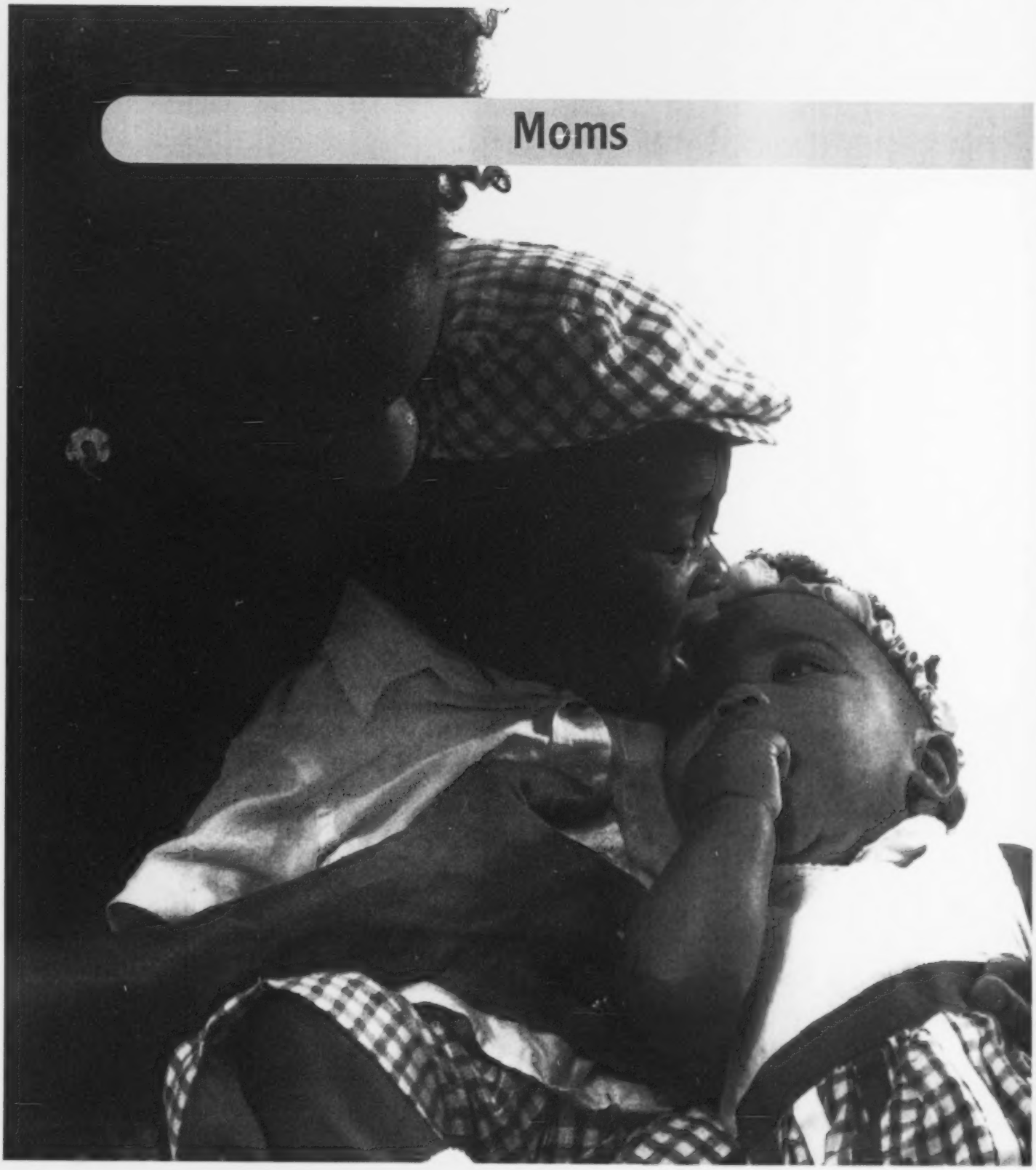
Moms



Physical care after childbirth

After you give birth, your body will slowly return to normal. This can take 6 weeks or longer.

It's common to have some physical discomfort after giving birth. Talk to your health care provider about post-partum physical care.

If you've had a cesarean birth, you can also get advice on post-partum care and comfort measures from your health care provider.

All mothers have some vaginal bleeding after giving birth. This is a normal part of recovering from childbirth. Vaginal bleeding:

- Can last for up to 6 weeks.
- May be dark red and heavy for the first few days.
- Will lessen over time and become lighter in colour. You may notice more bleeding when you are more active than usual.

Use pads or panty liners while this bleeding lasts.

Added info...

You need a post-partum check-up about 6 weeks after giving birth. This is an important part of your health care.

Make the appointment with your doctor as soon as you get home from the hospital.

Baby blues and post-partum depression

Baby blues

Many women have very mixed feelings that start a few days after their baby is born. This is so common that it has a name—baby blues.

You may feel:

- Let down, disappointed
- Happy one minute and crying the next
- Sad
- Stressed out
- Cranky
- Worried
- Overwhelmed

You may be very tired but still have trouble sleeping.

These feelings are normal. They usually go away in a week or 2.

If you feel like this, take care of yourself. Ask for help and support from the people around you. Talk to other mothers about how you feel.

Post-partum depression

Post-partum depression is a kind of depression that can happen to women after childbirth. It is a medical condition.

Post-partum depression can happen to anyone. It does not mean that you're a bad mother. It just means that you need some help to get through a hard time.

Mothers with post-partum depression can have many different feelings. These may include:

- Sadness—crying a lot or feeling like you want to cry
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Exhausted—you can't seem to fall asleep and you can't seem to wake up
- Worried, panicky, full of doubts
- Anxious, tense, on edge, angry
- Guilty
- Worthless, lonely, full of doubts
- Confused—can't think clearly
- Having no feelings for your baby
- Feeling like you want to hurt yourself or your baby
- Scary thoughts

Baby blues don't usually last longer than 2 weeks. If you still feel sad or upset after 2 weeks, or if these feelings are getting stronger, look for help. You can contact:

- Your family doctor
- Local emergency room
- Local public health office
- Local mental health clinic (contact information page 58), private counselor, psychologist, psychiatrist, or social worker
- Reproductive Mental Health Services, IWK Health Centre—470-8098

Sex

Your body will need time to heal after childbirth—usually about 6 weeks. Wait until your body is ready before having vaginal sex. This may be when any stitches have healed and your bleeding has stopped or is very light in colour and amount.

Many new mothers find that they are less interested in sex for a while after their baby is born. You're tired. You may still be sore from the birth. You're busy. You're getting used to being a mother. All of these things can make you less interested in sex. Wait until you feel ready.

Talk to your partner about how you feel. There are ways to be close without having sex. You can kiss, cuddle, massage, and hold each other. You can talk and listen to one another. You can do special things for one another—like running a bath, or making a favourite meal.

When you're ready to have vaginal sex again, start slowly and gently. Tell your partner what feels good and what doesn't. It may help to:

- **Use a water-based vaginal lotion or gel if your vagina is dry.**

  It's normal for your vagina to be dry after having a baby. Using a water-based vaginal lotion or gel can make sex more comfortable for both you and your partner. You can get these lotions or gels at a drugstore. You don't need a prescription.

- **Try new positions.**

  Do what's most comfortable for you now.

- **Use birth control every time.**

  Until you are ready to get pregnant again use birth control every time you have sex. You can get pregnant before your period returns.

Added info...

Some breastfeeding mothers find that their breasts leak or squirt milk during sex. Some couples enjoy this and make it part of their lovemaking. Some find it annoying.

You can reduce leaking by breastfeeding your baby or expressing milk before you have sex. Or you can keep a towel nearby and press it against your breasts to stop any leaks.

Birth control

Your body needs time to recover from pregnancy and childbirth before you get pregnant again. Use birth control every time you have vaginal sex until you are ready to have another baby.

There are many different kinds of birth control that all mothers can use after having a baby. Talk to your doctor, public health nurse, or a sexual health clinic (contact information, page 63). They can help you pick the kind of birth control that will work best for you.

Your periods

Exactly when your period returns will be different for every woman. How you feed your baby affects this. When you breastfeed often and breast milk is your baby's only food, it could be as long as 4 to 12 months before your period returns. If you're not breastfeeding, your period will usually return in about 6 to 12 weeks.

You can get pregnant without having a period. Use birth control every time you have sex until you're ready to get pregnant again.

Added info...

Latex or polyurethane male or female condoms are the only method of birth control that can protect you from STIs (sexually transmitted infections).

Even if you are using another method of birth control, you'll still need a condom to protect yourself from STIs.

On-going physical care

Once your body has recovered from childbirth, it's easy to just forget about your own health care. There's so much else to think about and do!

But taking care of your own health is important for you and your family.

Breast health

Breast cancer is one of the most common kinds of cancer for women. One of every 9 Canadian women will develop breast cancer during their lifetime.

The best way for you to notice changes in your breasts is to regularly examine your breasts yourself.

You do breast self-examination with your fingers. You feel all parts of your breasts, under your arms and your chest area, while standing in front of a mirror and while lying down.

Breast self-examination helps you to learn how your breasts normally feel. That way, you'll be able to feel if some part of your breast is getting thicker or harder than usual, or changing in any way.

Most lumps or changes in your breasts are not cancer. The only way to find out is to see a health care provider if you find a lump or change in your breast.

You can find out more about breast health and cancer screening from your health care provider, local public health office (contact information page 59), or the Canadian Cancer Society.

Added info...

To reduce your risk of breast cancer:

- Don't smoke. If you smoke, quit. Avoid secondhand-smoke. (See page 27 and 63 for more information about smoking.)
- Be physically active.
- Follow *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* and maintain a healthy weight. (See page 70 for a copy of the Food Guide.)
- Limit the amount of alcohol you drink.
- Breastfeed your baby.

CAUTION!

Women have different risks for breast cancer. For example, other family members may have had breast cancer.

You can develop cancer at any age.

Discuss your risks for breast cancer with your health care provider.

Pap tests

A Pap test catches changes in the cells of the cervix so they can be treated before they can become cancer.

Women should have their first Pap test within 3 years of becoming sexually active or at age 21, whichever comes first.

After this, you should have regular Pap tests. Talk to your health care provider about what this means for you. Don't put this off! A Pap test could save your life.

You can have a Pap test done in your health care provider's office or at a health center.

To find out more about Pap tests and cervical cancer, contact your health care provider, your local public health office (contact information page 59), or the Canadian Cancer Society.

CAUTION!

Even if you've had the HPV vaccine, you still need regular Pap tests.

HPV vaccine effectively prevents the 4 kinds of HPV that cause most cervical cancer and genital warts. However, there are other kinds that it doesn't prevent, so Pap tests are still needed.

Added info...

You can reduce your risk of cancer of the cervix by:

- Using a latex or polyurethane condom
- Having a regular Pap test
- Limiting the number of sexual partners
- Not smoking
- Following ***Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide***

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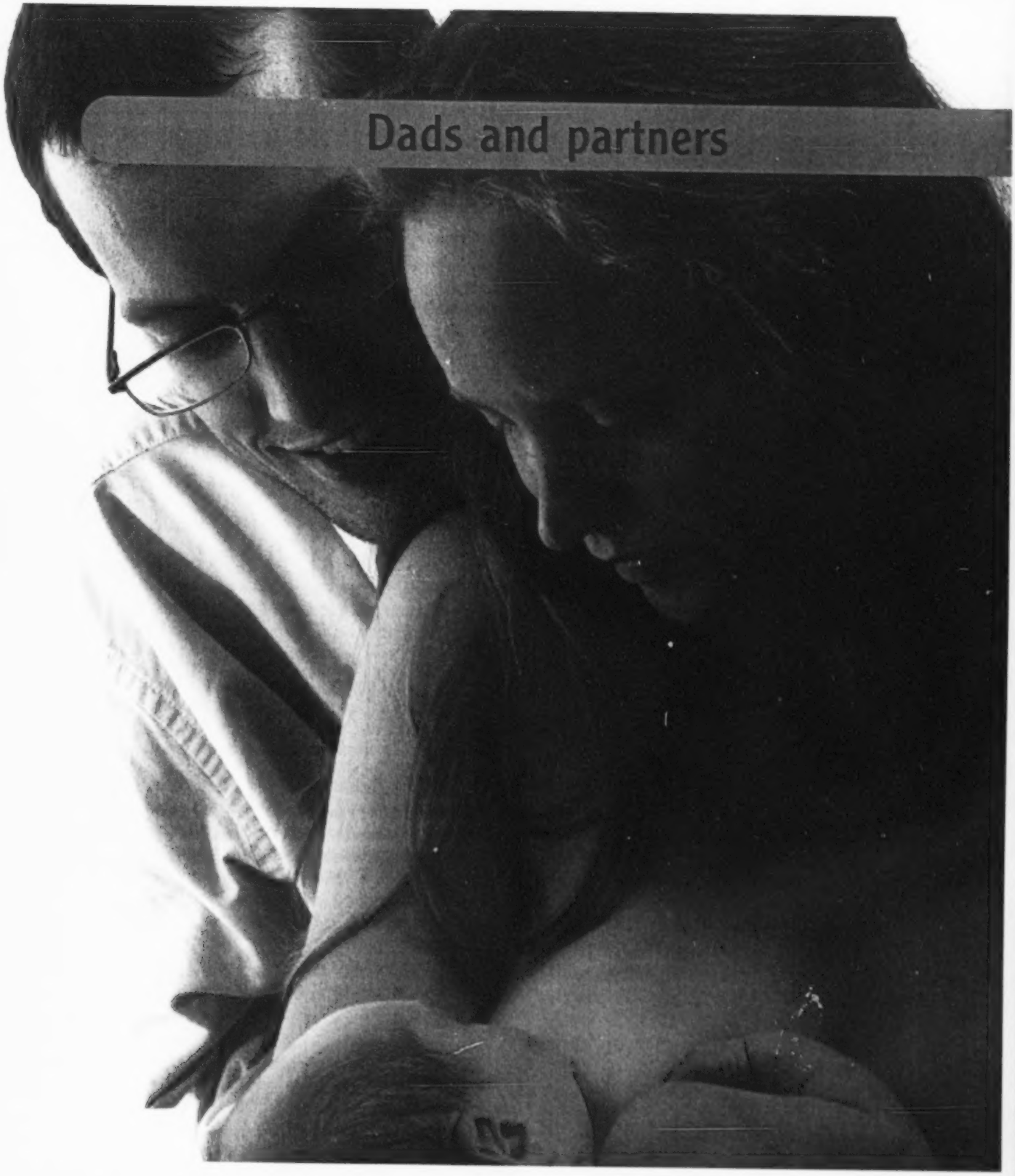
Dads and partners



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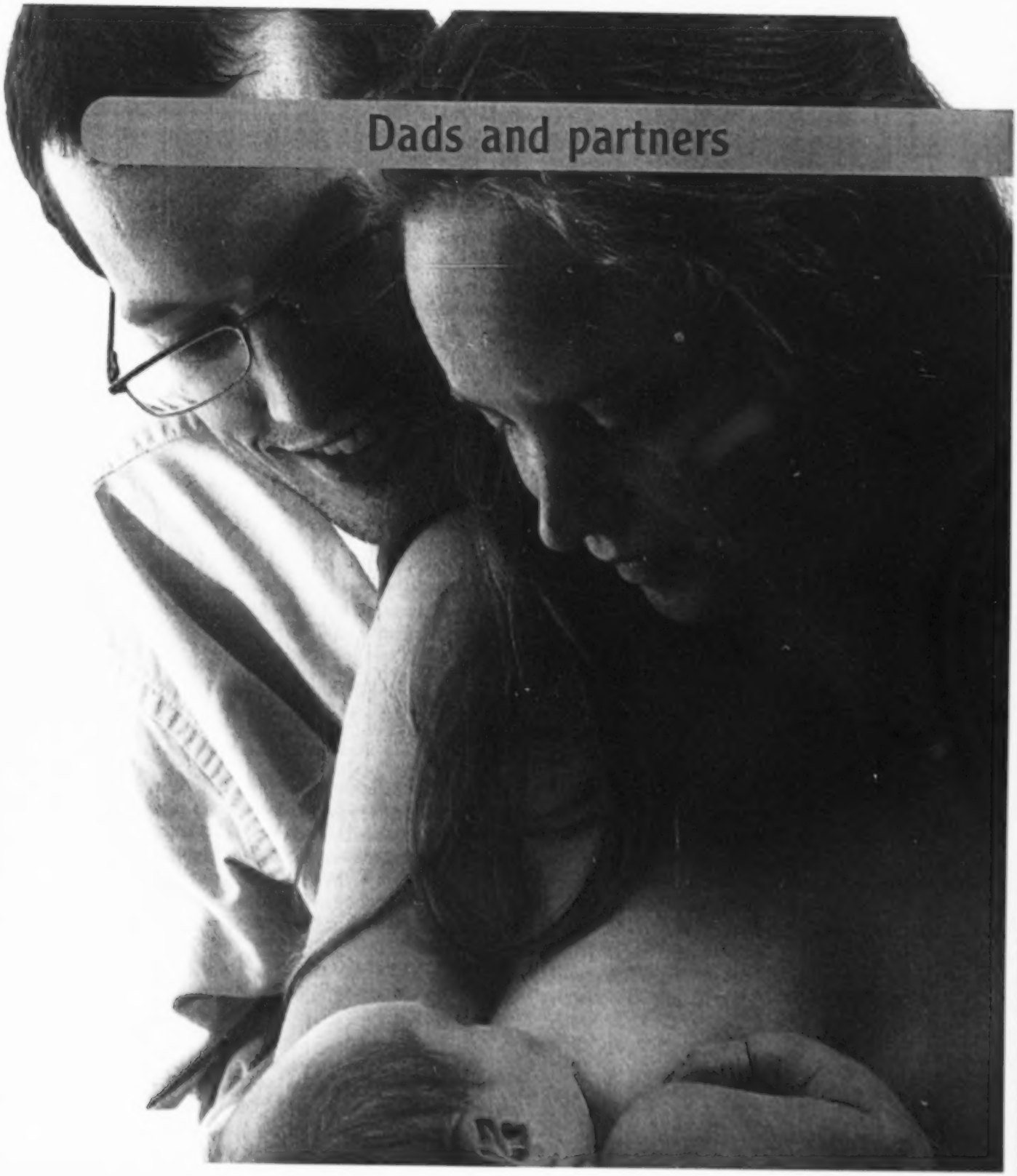

Your important role

Families come in many forms. Whatever shape your family takes, living with a new baby can be just as tiring and confusing for a new dad or partner as it is for a new mom.

You need to get to know—and learn to take care of—your new baby. This takes time and effort.

You may sometimes feel a bit left out. Everyone asks about the baby or the mother. No one seems to see that parenthood is affecting you, too.

You may also feel helpless once in a while. You may feel the urge to "fix" things when your partner is struggling. Becoming a family takes time, though, and lots of talking. You and your partner will need to work together to support and help one another.

Remember that you are special to your baby. You're not just a babysitter. You're not just "helping out." You are your baby's parent. It's your job to be a full partner in loving, caring for, and raising your child.

- **Talk about your feelings.**

  New parents often have mixed feelings. You can feel proud, happy, worried, relieved, left out, and tired—all at the same time.

  Talk to your baby's mother. Tell her how you feel. Listen to her when she tells you how she feels. Becoming a parent can be stressful. Being able to talk to each other will help you both be better parents. It will also strengthen your ties to each other.

Added info...

There are many different kinds of families and many different relationships in which people love and raise children as partners and families.

- You and your partner may be gay, lesbian, transgender, or straight.
- Both parents may be living together or living apart.
- You may be birthing your baby, adopting, or fostering.
- You may be raising a grandchild.
- You may be living on your own, or sharing a home with other family members.

We hope that all those who are welcoming a new baby—or babies—into their lives and families will feel included here.

- **Support your baby's mother.**

  New mothers need physical, emotional, and financial support.

  Pregnancy and birth are hard on a woman's body. It will take time for her to recover. She may also have mood swings or "baby blues." She will need your help, support, and understanding.

  Some mothers develop more serious post-partum depression. Read the information about post-partum depression on page 9 of this booklet. If your partner shows any signs of depression, help her to get the help she needs.

When she's breastfeeding, she'll need your support, too. Breastfeeding gives your baby the best possible start in life. It contains exactly what babies need to grow strong and healthy. It protects them from allergies and illness. It can take time for mothers and babies to learn to breastfeed. Your support and encouragement make a big difference.

It takes time for you to learn how to best support your partner. Be kind and patient. Ask your partner what she needs and wants. By supporting your partner as she breastfeeds, you are giving your baby the best possible start in life.

- **Share baby care.**

  No one "just knows" how to take care of a baby. Mothers have to learn how to change a diaper and give a bath. Partners can learn too. Your baby depends on you for loving care.

- **Be an active parent.**

  Spend time alone with your baby. Get to know her. Learn what makes her smile. Figure out what she wants when she cries. Hold her. Smile at her. Talk to her. Sing to her. Show her that she can trust you to love her and to be there when she needs you.

- **Build a loving family.**

  Spend time with your baby and her mother. Do things together that you all enjoy. Grow together into a loving, supportive family.

Having a baby is one of the biggest changes you and your partner will have in your lives. You will grow as a parent over time. The more you put into being a parent, the more you will get out of it.

Added info...

It may be a while before your partner is interested in having sex again.

Her body needs 6 weeks or longer to recover from childbirth. She's tired. Learning to be a mother can be stressful.

- **Be patient**. There's no need to rush. You can stay close physically by kissing, cuddling, and massaging one another. When your partner is ready for intercourse, start slowly. Be careful and gentle. Let her tell you what feels good.

- **Use a water-based vaginal lotion or gel when you start having sex again.** It's normal for a woman's vagina to be dry after having a baby. Using a water-based vaginal lotion or gel can make sex more comfortable for both you and your partner. You can get these lotions or gels at a drugstore. You don't need a prescription.

- **Use birth control every time you have sex until you and your partner are ready to have another baby.** A woman can get pregnant anytime after having a baby, even if she hasn't had a period.

  Latex or polyurethane male or female condoms are the only method of birth control that can protect you from STIs (sexually transmitted infections).

  Even if you and your partner are using another method of birth control, you'll still need a condom to protect you both from STIs.

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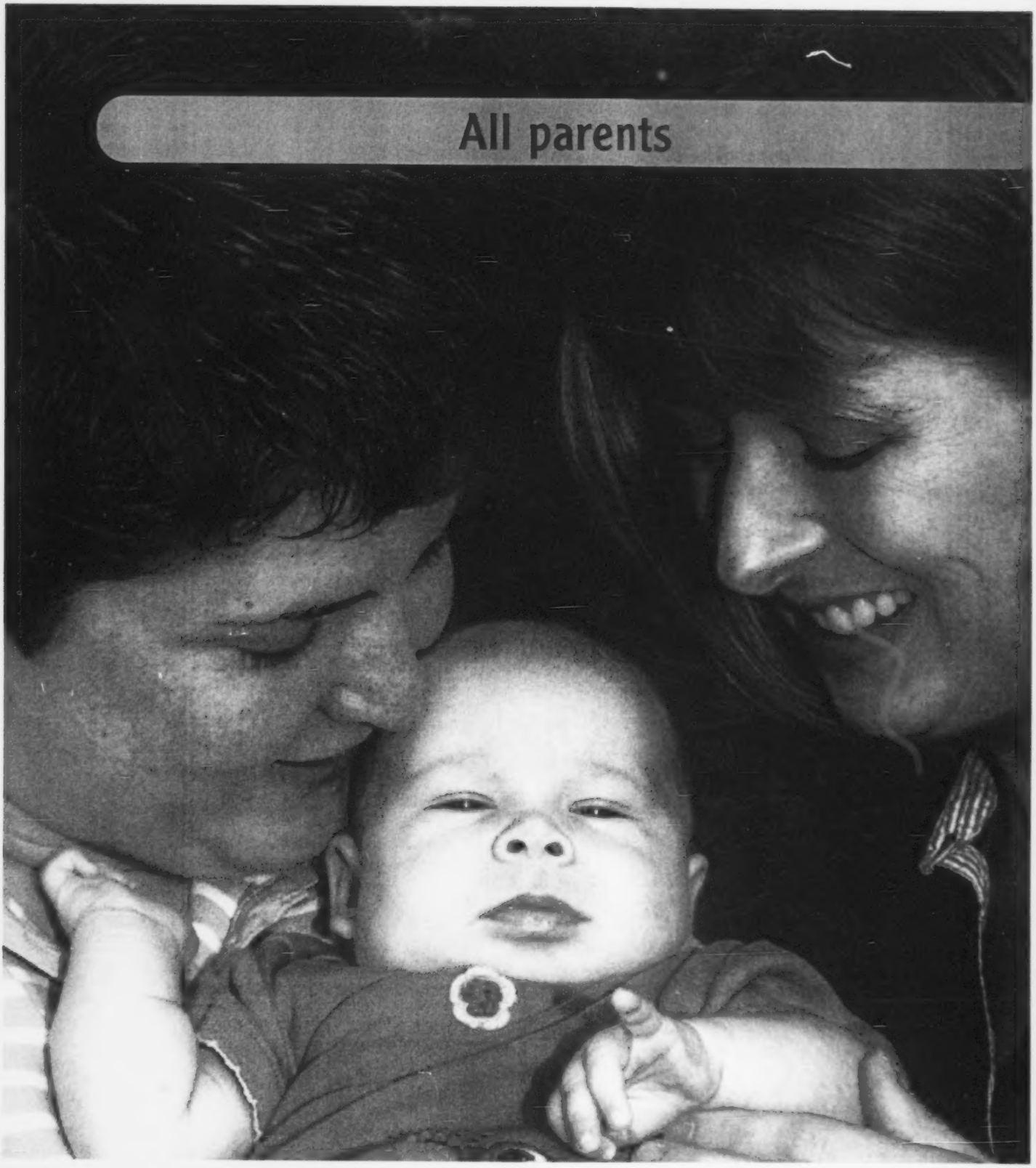

All parents

Take care of yourself

New babies bring love and joy. They also bring change.

A new baby changes how everything happens in your home and your life. Becoming a parent changes how you look at yourself and how you see your place in the world.

Change is very tiring, even when you welcome it.

Most new parents are surprised at how tired and overwhelmed they feel for the first few months.

Caring for a new baby takes a lot of physical and mental energy. It seems like your baby needs your care, love, and attention every minute of the day—and most of the night. It's easy to feel as if being a parent is taking over your entire life.

Remind yourself that this time in your life is really very short—even if sometimes it doesn't seem that way. Enjoy it!

It's not selfish to take a little time for yourself. You're still a person as well as your baby's parent. You'll take better care of your baby when you take care of yourself.

- **Get as much sleep as you can.**

  Rest when your baby sleeps. Unplug the phone. Hang a note on the door that says, "Do not disturb. Baby sleeping." Getting in a nap while your baby sleeps can be difficult if you also have a toddler to care for. You can try to time your toddler's naps to match your baby's. You can also try snuggling down to read or spend quiet time with your toddler while your baby sleeps. Maybe you'll both drift off to sleep together.

- **Ask visitors to stay away for a while.**

  Give yourself some time to rest after giving birth and to get used to being parents.

- **Don't do anything you don't have to do.**

  You can make a list of chores from most important to least important. Do only the things that you MUST do to take care of yourself, your baby, and other children.

- **Ask for help when you need it.**

  Take help when it's offered. Family, friends, and neighbours can help with jobs like food shopping, cooking, cleaning, and laundry. Make a "wish list" of things you'd like help with. That way, you can ask for what you need or when someone offers to help, you'll remember what you need most.

- **Find someone to talk to.**

  Other parents are a great source of information, ideas, and support. You'll feel better knowing you're not the only one with questions, feelings, and problems.

  Playgrounds, coffee shops, malls, libraries, and parks are some good places to meet other parents. You may feel shy about talking to someone you don't know, but try it. Other parents are probably as eager to talk as you are.

- **Join a group for new parents.**

  Look for parent's groups, mothers' groups, fathers' groups, playgroups, and family resource centres (contact information page 60) in your community.

- **Make some time for yourself every day.**

  Try to find some time to be alone. Do something that makes you feel good. Go for a walk or a run. Take a shower or bath. Watch a TV show. Talk to a friend. Read.

Added info...

Your health and your environment

Part of taking care of yourself is taking care of your environment. There are many factors in the indoor and outdoor environment that can affect both your health and your children's health.

If you have questions or concerns about environmental issues—like air or water quality in your home or community—contact the Department of Environment and Labour (contact information, page 58).

Eating for wellness

"Wellness" means feeling good—in your body, your mind, and your emotions. It means having people around who care about you.

Eating well helps us to feel well. Food fuels our body, mind, and spirit.

When you feel well, you feel good about yourself. You have the energy you need to live your life and give your children the loving care they need.

Added info...

You'll find good advice about the foods you need to feel well and be healthy in ***Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide***.

You'll find a copy printed in the back of this book.

How do you feel about food?

Food means different things to different people. You may have happy memories linked to food—like baking cookies with your grandmother, eating dinner with your family, or big holiday meals. There may also be some unhappy memories, like being forced to clean your plate or being punished by being sent to bed without dinner.

How you think and feel about food will affect how you feed your children and what you teach them about food and eating. You are your children's most important teacher and role model. It can be helpful to think about where your eating habits and ideas about food have come from. Then you can decide which of these you want to share with your children.

All parents

You can start by asking yourself some questions about your own childhood.

- Did your family eat meals together?
- Did you watch television while you ate?
- Did your parents encourage you to try new foods?
- Did you prepare food together?
- Did you grow some of your own food in a garden?
- Did you have to eat everything on your plate?
- Did your parents encourage you to eat just until you were full, even if there was still food left on your plate?
- Did you have to finish certain foods—like vegetables, for example— before you could have dessert?
- Was food ever in short supply when you were growing up?
- Were there times when there wasn't enough food to go around?

Can you think of other ways that food affected your childhood?

Use these questions as a way to start thinking and talking about how your ideas about food were formed. Think about how you want your children to think about food and eating. Talk about these issues with everyone who lives with—or eats with—your children.

Decide what you will do to make eating well a happy part of your family's life.

Added info...

Who decides what you eat?

We are surrounded with so much information about food and so many food choices, that it can be hard to decide what's best for you and your family.

Advertisements for fast food, junk food, and expensive brands can make it difficult to make choices about how to spend your food budget. Even very young children are affected by these messages.

As a parent, it's important that you understand your own values around food. Be aware of the influence that marketing can have on your food choices.

Family meals are a time for sharing

Mealtime can be a time to share and to learn—to talk about the day, to catch up with one another, and to learn about the food you're eating together. Making this time together an important part of your family life can make eating well fun for everyone.

Sharing family meals doesn't just mean eating together. It can include everything involved in getting the meal on the table. Even small children can share in:

- Deciding what to eat—offer healthy options for your children to choose from. For example, an apple or a pear, peas or carrots.
- Shopping—avoid the snack aisle when shopping with children!
- Preparing or cooking the meal
- Setting the table
- Eating
- Cleaning up

Keep mealtimes calm and pleasant. This isn't the time to argue or fight. Turn off the TV and focus on one another.

What you can do to make eating for wellness part of your children's life

- *Be a good example.*

  Eat well yourself. Sit down and eat with your children.

- *Encourage children to eat, but don't force them.*

  Trust them to eat the amount of food they need to grow and be healthy.

- *Offer new foods.*

  Give your children the chance to try new tastes and textures.

- *Offer healthy foods for snacks and at meals.*

  You are in charge of what you buy and what you offer your children.

- *Have regular meal and snack times.*

  You are in charge of when your child eats. Don't offer food just to keep your child happy. Don't use food as a reward or punishment.

- *Involve the whole family in planning and preparing meals.*

  Give your children happy memories of their own.

- *Make mealtimes family times.*

  Turn off the TV and enjoy sharing a meal and spending time together.

Make feeding times for babies and mealtimes for children times for learning, sharing, and love.

All parents

Steps toward eating for wellness

- **Small changes can make a big difference.**

  Learning to eat for wellness takes time. You can do it slowly by making small changes in the way you eat. For example, you can try:

  - Eating more fruits and vegetables
  - Drinking more water every day
  - Eating more whole grain breads and cereals
  - Choosing snacks lower in fat and sugar

- **Look for ways to eat well for less money.**

  Look around your community for lower cost food choices. You can try farmer's markets, local trading systems, and community gardens. Foods grown close to home are fresher because they get from the field to your table faster. Supporting local markets and community gardens also helps build your community. You'll learn more about food and meet new people. And it can be a lot of fun!

  Shop for basic foods from ***Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide***. You'll save money by buying fewer pre-packaged and convenience foods.

- **Learn more about cooking.**

  Cooking is a skill. Everybody learns by watching others, asking for advice, and trying. Cooking and eating simple, nourishing meals together can be fun for the whole family. It will give your children a good start toward a lifetime of healthy eating.

  - Pick basic, easy recipes.
  - Shop for healthy, basic ingredients.
  - When your children are old enough, let them help with shopping and cooking.
  - Share the food by eating together as a family.

  Community kitchens and local cooking programs can help you learn how to cook for less. Look for information about these programs from family resource centres, local supermarkets, and other parents. Talking with other parents and family members can be a good way to get ideas for shopping and cooking. Your local library will have many cookbooks you can borrow. You can also get good information from registered dietitians.

- **Eat well when you eat out.**

  Eating out once in a while is a treat everyone enjoys. To make healthy choices when eating out:

  - *Choose milk, 100% juice, or water to drink.*
  - *Choose foods from several food groups.* Check ***Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*** for choices in each food group.
  - *Look for choices that are lower in fat, sugar, and salt.* Look for foods that are steamed, broiled, baked, roasted, poached, or stir-fried. Ask for salad dressing, sauces, and gravy on the side.
  - *Eat only as much as you need.* Some restaurants serve very large amounts of food—more than one person can eat. Don't force yourself to eat it all. Take what you can't finish home for later.

- **When you're pressed for time, plan meals in advance.**

  Being a parent and raising a family takes a lot of time. When you also work outside of the home, time can be in very short supply. Planning ahead can help you make sure you—and your family—eat well.

  - *When you cook, double the recipe.* Freeze half for another day.
  - *Pick a day and make several meals to freeze for later.* This can be fun if you do it with a friend.
  - *Plan for more than one meal at a time.* For example, make extra for supper and use the leftovers for lunch the next day.
  - *Focus on healthy snacks.* When time is short, you may miss a meal once in a while. Make sure you have healthy snacks on hand so you and your children don't fill up on less healthy foods. Carry healthy foods with you when you're out. Fruit, cereal bars, and whole grain crackers are healthier choices.

Added info...

Sometimes getting enough healthy food to meet the needs of your family can be a challenge. At one time or another, this can be true for anyone. These times can be very stressful.

Check out groups in your community that can offer support with food options— for example cooking clubs, community gardens, and other programs. Call your local family resource centre, local farmers markets, food banks, and other service agencies to see what options are available.

Many groups in Nova Scotia are working on projects and ideas to improve access to local food in the community and welcome volunteers.

All parents

Being active

Fitting exercise into life with a new baby can be a challenge. But believe it or not, the more active you are, the less tired you'll feel.

You need about 30 to 60 minutes of activity each day to stay healthy. You don't need to get it all at once. Ten minutes here and there of walking, climbing stairs, or active play with your baby, add up over the day.

- **Walk whenever you can.**

  You can walk even during the winter. Start with a 10-minute walk—gradually increase the time. Walk to the store. Walk to do your errands whenever you can. Look for walking paths near your home. Take your kids with you.

- **Play with your children.**

  Roll around on the floor together. Dance around the room holding your baby.

- **Look for activities or programs where you live.**

  You might find exercise classes or parent and child activities. You can contact your local recreation department, community centre, or YM/YWCA. (contact information for Recreation Nova Scotia, page 60)

The benefits of being active are endless—for you and your family. You'll be healthier and feel happier. And spending active time together will bring you closer to one another. Start slowly. Do more over time. You'll feel better and be an active example for your children.

Smoking

One of the best things you can do for your own health—as well as for your baby's—is to be a non-smoker.

Many parents stop smoking before their baby is born because they know that smoking can hurt their unborn baby. It's important for your own health—as well as for your baby's—to remain a non-smoker after you baby is born.

Five reasons why you might be tempted to smoke again and some things you can do instead.

1. **You think you can just smoke a little—just one puff or one cigarette.**

   One of the things that people do to stop smoking is to smoke fewer and fewer cigarettes over a period of time.Unfortunately, the opposite thing starts to happen when you smoke "just one." Gradually you will smoke more and more until you are back to where you were before you quit.

   If you have started smoking again, think of it as a "slip," not a failure. Becoming smoke free is a process. It may take many tries to be smoke free. You've quit before. You can do it again.

   When you feel the urge to smoke:

   - Think about why you stopped smoking in the first place. Smoking is still bad for your health and your baby's health.
   - Stay away from places and activities that make you want to smoke. For example, if you smoke when you meet friends for coffee, meet them somewhere else where you won't be tempted to smoke.
   - Do something else. Eat a carrot. Brush your teeth. If you want to smoke after eating, get right up from the table. Go for a walk or do something you enjoy.
   - Remind yourself of how much better you feel when you're a non-smoker.
   - Call a friend and talk when you feel like smoking.

2. **People around you are smoking and you can't resist.**

   It can be very hard to stay quit if your partner or others living with you still smoke. Friends and family who smoke can also make it difficult for you. Ask for their help. Ask them not to smoke around you or your baby. Ask them not to offer you cigarettes. Ask a few close friends or family members to be your support system—people you can call on for help when you want to smoke.

3. **Smoking reminds you of what your life was like before you had a baby to look after.**

   Being a parent may be harder than you think it will be. Everything is different. You may feel tied down. You may be more tired than you thought you'd be. It can make you long for the fun and freedom you used to have.

   Find ways to have fun now. Play with your baby. Take him for walks. Make friends with other parents. Join a play group. Find a babysitter and go out. Do something you enjoy with someone you

like being with. Take care of yourself. Do things that make you feel good about yourself and your new life.

4. **You think that smoking will help you handle your feelings and stress.**

   There is stress in everyone's life. There are other ways to handle stress than by smoking. You'll find some ideas on page 30 of this book.

5. **You didn't really want to quit in the first place and only did it because you—or your partner—were pregnant.**

   Quitting during pregnancy was a wonderful gift—to yourself and to your baby. You gave him a healthier parent. You kept him safe so he could grow and be healthy. He still needs your protection.

   Tobacco smoke is just as bad for your baby now as it was during pregnancy—maybe worse. When a mother—or anyone around her—smokes during pregnancy, the smoke she breathes in affects the baby. Now, your baby breathes in even more smoke—the smoke her parents exhale as well as the smoke from burning cigarettes.

   This secondhand-smoke is very bad for children's health. When their parents smoke, children have more:

   - Ear infections
   - Colds and sore throats
   - Asthma
   - Lung infections
   - Allergies
   - Coughing and wheezing
   - SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome)

Quitting and staying quit is worth the effort. You can find support by calling the Smokers' Helpline.

Added info...

Protect your children from secondhand smoke.

- Give your children a smoke free home.
  - Don't allow anyone to smoke in your home or car. This includes friends, family members, and babysitters, as well as yourself. Be polite but firm. Ask people to go outside to smoke.
  - Post a "Smoke-Free Home" sign on your door or window to let people know that your home is smoke free.
- Don't take your children to places where people are smoking.
- Don't smoke—or let anyone else smoke—around your children.

Added info...

Smokers' Helpline **Phone: 1-877-513-5333**

Smokers' Helpline is a free, telephone-based service to help you quit smoking and stay quit. You can ask about:

- The effects of smoking after pregnancy
- Managing stress
- A partner's role in the quit process
- Making a quit plan
- Strategies to help you reach your goal
- Helpful resources in your community
- Quitting methods
- Withdrawal symptoms
- The benefits of quitting after pregnancy
- Dealing with slips and relapses
- Coping with cravings
- Strategies to help you reach your goal

Hours

Monday to Thursday: 9 AM to 10 PM • Fridays: 9 AM to 7 PM • Weekends: 10 AM to 6 PM

Drugs and addictions

Any addiction—like drugs, alcohol, or gambling—that causes problems in your personal life, or problems to your family and friends, will affect your ability to give your children the love and care they need.

You don't have to deal with this alone. There are counselors, community organizations, and agencies you can talk to. You may also want help if another member of your family has a problem with addictions.

Look for help from:

- **Addiction Services** (contact information, page 58)
- **Alcoholics Anonymous / Al Anon** (Check your local phone book for contact information.)
- **Narcotics Anonymous** (Check your local phone book for contact information.)
- **Problem Gambling Hotline (1-888-347-8888)**
- **Public Health Services** (contact information, page 59)
- **Health care providers**

If you have addiction problems, you owe it to yourself and your children to get the help you need.

All parents

Mental health

Self-esteem

Self-esteem—feeling good about yourself and what you do—is important for parents. Part of your job as a parent is to help your children feel good about themselves. You do this with your loving care and by responding to their needs. This teaches children that they matter. It builds their self-esteem.

It's a lot easier to help your children feel good about themselves when you feel good about yourself.

Being a parent is a tough job. Parents learn as they go—and everyone makes lots of mistakes. It's easy to feel bad about everything that goes wrong. It's easy to think that everyone else is a better parent or a better person than you are.

One way to build your self-esteem is to focus on what you do right.

- **Be fair to yourself.**

  Nobody does everything right, every time. When things go wrong, you might find yourself thinking, "I'm stupid," or "I'm useless." Stop yourself right there. Instead say, "I'm smart. I can handle this." Build yourself up. Believe in yourself.

- **Think about the good things in your life.**

  Be proud of what you do. Make your baby laugh. Give a friend a hug. Smile—at yourself, at your baby, at your partner, and your friends. A smile makes everyone feel better. Helping others feel good about themselves can make you feel good, too.

- **Do things for yourself.**

  Make plans. Set goals. Take small steps toward reaching them. Give yourself a pat on the back for every little step that gets you closer to your goal.

Stress

New parents may feel stressed for many reasons.

- You're tired.
- You may feel overwhelmed by everything that needs to be done. For example, when the house is dirty, the laundry piles up and you can't seem to get to it.
- You have less time—for yourself, for your partner, your other children, your job.
- You may have concerns about money, jobs, or housing.
- You're getting advice about parenting from everyone you know. And they're all telling you something different.

These ideas have helped other parents handle the stress in their life.

- **Take care of yourself.**

  Eat well and get the rest you need.

- **Slow down.**

  Relax. Have a cup of tea. Take a few minutes for yourself.

- **Go for a walk.**

  Get some fresh air.

- **Learn to say "no."**

  Having too much to do can cause a lot of stress. Focus on doing what needs to be done. Say "no" to other things.

- **Find someone to talk to.**

  This could be a friend, partner, family member, or someone you trust. Don't keep your feelings bottled up.

- **Look for help if you need it.**

  There is lots of help in the community—for example you can try:

  - Public health offices (contact information, page 59)
  - Mental health services (contact information, page 58)
  - Family resource centres (contact information, page 60)
  - Support groups

- **Solve the problems you can.**

  Concentrate on the things that are important to you. Try to let other things go.

Depression

Depression is an illness. It can happen to anyone. It doesn't mean that you're a bad parent.

Depression is like a grey cloud over your spirits. Nothing you do seems to make you feel better. You're not interested in the people or things you used to care about.

When you are depressed, you might feel:

- Helpless and hopeless
- Sad—crying a lot or feeling like you want to cry
- Exhausted—you can't seem to fall asleep and you can't seem to wake up
- Anxious
- Tense, on edge, angry
- Guilty
- Worthless, lonely, full of doubts
- Confused—can't think clearly
- Worried, panicky

Look for help if you feel like this for more than 2 weeks. You can contact:

- Your family doctor
- Local emergency room
- Local public health office
- Local mental health clinic, private counselor, psychologist, psychiatrist, or social worker
- Reproductive Mental Health Services, IWK Health Centre—470-8098

Depression can be treated. It's important for you—and your family—that you get the help you need.

CAUTION!

See a doctor or go to the emergency room right away:

- If you feel like you might hurt yourself or your baby
- If you have scary thoughts

Anger

All parents get angry. Anger is a normal emotion and everyone feels it. Getting angry doesn't mean that you're a bad parent. It doesn't mean that you don't love your children. It means that you're human.

What's important is learning to express your anger in ways that won't hurt your children.

It is frightening for children to see a parent get angry. It can be frightening for a parent to feel that he or she is losing control.

You can find ways to handle your anger that won't hurt you, your children, or anyone else.

What's really making you mad?

Not enough money. Not enough time. Not enough sleep. A bad job or no job at all. Noisy neighbours. Trouble in a relationship. Fights with your own parents. Car trouble.

Everyone has things in their life that can make them frustrated and angry.

Parenting is a big part of your life, but it's not the only part. Sometimes the real cause of your anger has nothing to do with your children. What they do is just the trigger that sets off the anger you feel about other things.

It's important to understand the real source of your anger so that you won't take it out on your kids.

In order to deal with your anger, you need to know what's causing it. Sometimes this is easy to see. Sometimes it's not. You may need to talk to a counselor who has experience in helping people deal with their anger.

Family resource centres (contact information, page 60), women's centres (contact information, page 65), and other community organizations may offer anger management programs or be able to help you find one. Look for the help you need. You and your children are worth it.

CAUTION!

It is **NEVER** okay to hit or shake your baby or child.

What to do when you feel angry

1. **Learn to notice when you START to get angry.**

   Anger has stages. It builds up bit by bit. Sometimes anger builds up slowly. Sometimes you can get very angry, very fast.

   It can be very helpful to notice when you're starting to get angry and do something about it before you explode.

   The stages of anger are:

   - ***You feel bothered by something*:**

     The kids are being very noisy, and you have a headache.

   - ***You feel more upset*:**

     You ask them to quiet down and they don't.

   - ***You get angry*:**

     You tell them to be quiet now. The noise gets louder.

   - ***Now you're really mad*:**

     You start yelling. They start screaming.

   - ***You're ready to explode*:**

     You want to hit someone or something!

2. **Act BEFORE you get angry.**

   When you notice that you're getting upset or angry:

   - ***Stop.***

     Take a deep breath.

   - ***Think.***

     What's going on? Why are you getting angry?

   - ***Decide what to do.***

     What do you want to happen? What do you want your child to learn? What can you do to get closer to that goal?

   - ***Do it.***

3. **Take a time-out if you feel yourself losing control.**

   - ***Leave the room.***

     Be sure your baby or child is in a safe place. If your child is old enough to understand, you can say, "I'm getting angry. I need a time-out to calm down." This not only spares your children seeing you explode, it also shows them what to do when *they* get angry.

   - ***Do whatever you need to do to calm down.***

     Take deep breaths. Lie down and close your eyes. Make faces in the mirror.

   - ***Return to your children when you feel in control.***

4. **Say you're sorry if you lose your temper.**

   Tell your child that you were wrong to get angry.

All parents

Family violence

Family violence is abuse that happens in a family or other close relationship. Abuse can happen in any kind of family. The people most often abused are women, children, and the elderly.

Abuse can happen at any time, but it often starts—or gets worse—during and soon after pregnancy.

If you are being abused, you may feel afraid. You may feel helpless and worthless. You may feel like a failure. You may think that it's all your fault. These feelings can make it hard to look for help.

If you are being abused, you should know that:

- The abuse is NEVER your fault. You do NOT deserve it.
- NO ONE has the right to abuse you.
- Children are hurt by seeing or hearing abuse in their family. This is true even if they are not physically abused themselves.
- Physical and sexual assault are crimes. It's also a crime to threaten physical or sexual abuse.
- You are not alone. There are people who can help you.

If you are being abused, you will need help and support to work out what you want to do. Talking to someone you trust is a good first step.

You can also look for help and support in your community. Try:

- Women's' shelters, transition houses (contact information, page 63), women's centres (contact information, page 65)
- Help lines
- Police
- Support groups
- Domestic abuse intervention programs for men
- Legal aid
- Counseling services
- Clergy
- Medical services

Whatever you decide to do, your safety and your children's safety are what matter most.

Added info...

You'll find more information about what to do if you are being abused in **Making Changes**, a booklet from the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women. You can get a copy from your local family resource centre or public health office.(contact information, page 65)

Added info...

Abuse can be physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, or financial.

It is abuse if anyone:

- Scares or threatens you
- Yells at you
- Calls you names
- Hits or hurts you physically
- Throws or breaks things
- Stops you from seeing your family or friends
- Demands sex
- Questions everything you do
- Tries to control everything you do
- Controls all the money and family finances
- Tells you the abuse is your fault
- Threatens to hurt or kill people or pets you care about

Added info...

Child abuse is a crime.

It is child abuse:

- **When someone hurts a child.** Child abuse can be physical—hitting, shaking, or other injuries. Abuse can be sexual, verbal, or emotional. Neglect—not taking care of a child—can be abuse. It is abuse if a child sees or hears others being abused.
- **When a parent doesn't protect their child** from another person's abuse.

The law says that if you know or think that a child is being abused, you must report it to the police or to Child Protection Services. You can contact them through your local Community Services Office. (contact information, page 58)

If you have a good reason for thinking a child is being abused, but it turns out you're wrong, you won't get into trouble for reporting abuse.

Life changes — loss and grief

Grief is what you feel when you lose something you value. Grief is a normal and natural response to loss.

The birth of a baby and the early days and weeks of parenting can be times of great stress and intense feelings. You can feel loss, as well as gain, as you become a parent. There are many new feelings to deal with. It's also a time when old feelings of grief and loss are often stirred up.

Everyone faces loss at some time in their life. Most of us understand and expect grief when someone dies. We grieve the death of a loved one or the loss of a baby through miscarriage, stillbirth, or SIDS. There is grief at the loss you feel after an abortion.

There are lost hopes and dreams when a relationship breaks down or a family breaks up.

There is a feeling of loss when you find things don't work out the way you planned or hoped—for example, when a baby is born prematurely or has medical problems or disabilities.

When you lose a job, when a pet dies, or when you move away from friends or friends move away from you, you suffer a loss.

Everyone feels grief when they lose something they value. All losses need to be grieved.

It doesn't help to hide feelings of grief. It doesn't help to ignore them and hope they go away. Grief is a kind of pain that will pop up later if you try to ignore it. You need to work through your grief in order to get on with your life.

It's important to find healthy ways to express the grief you feel when you lose someone or something that's important to you. Otherwise, you may take your feelings out on yourself or others. When people can't express the grief they feel, they can become angry or abusive, abuse alcohol or drugs, or develop illnesses. Talk with a health care provider if you think you need professional help to deal with grief.

Helping small children deal with grief

Babies and small children feel loss and grief too. They feel grief when they lose or are separated from someone they are attached to—like a parent, grandparent, brother or sister, or caregiver.

Babies and small children don't understand why people they are attached to are no longer a part of their life. They don't understand about death or separation. They don't understand why a parent isn't around anymore. They don't understand why you have moved away from Grandpa. They don't understand why the caregiver they like is no longer at daycare. But they feel grief at the loss.

Change is difficult for small children and they feel the loss that change can bring as grief.

Babies and small children can't tell you how they feel. They show grief by:

- Having problems eating or sleeping
- Acting younger than their age—for example, toddlers who have been toilet trained may start wetting their pants again
- Being fussy or very quiet
- Throwing tantrums
- Being very clingy, fearful, or insecure
- Being very difficult to soothe

You can help your baby or small child through grief by being there. Spend extra time with your child. Offer lots of loving care—rocking, hugging, cuddling. Be patient. Talk with your child about what is happening.

It also helps to stick to your child's routines for eating, sleeping, and playing so that the rest of his life is as normal as possible.

Talk with a health care provider if you are concerned about how your child is dealing with grief.

Sharing your values and traditions with your children

Values

Our values are beliefs that we begin to learn as children and which can change as we grow and develop. They guide us in the choices we make and how we live our life.

Our values are shaped by our family, our culture, our religion, our community, and our experiences.

You can have values about many things:

- How you treat other people
- How you think children should be raised
- How important material things are to you
- The importance of family
- Relationships between partners

Sharing your values with your children is part of being a parent.

Added info...

Positive values—like honesty, kindness, and helpfulness—can make a family strong and help children grow and learn.

But unhealthy values—like a belief that hitting a child or another family member is okay—can hurt the entire family.

There are community resources available to help families understand and develop healthy values. Contact a family resource centre, public health office, or health care provider if you have concerns about the values your children are learning. (contact information, page 58-65)

All parents

The first step in sharing your values with your children is to have a strong and loving bond with them. Children learn the most from the people they care most about and are most strongly attached to. Building this bond of love and attachment starts at birth.

As a parent, you have the closest bond with your children. You are their most important teacher.

You share your values with your children by living those values every day. Children follow your example—they are more likely to copy what you do than to copy what you say. If you respect others, your child will learn from your example to treat others this way.

Parents are teaching their children values all the time—whether they know it or not. If you are parenting with a partner, sharing parenting, or living with other adults, it's important that you talk together about your values and work out what you want to share with your children. Ask yourself:

- What are the values you learned from your family when you were growing up? Which of these are still important to you? Are there any you'd like to change?
- What are the values you'd like your children to have?
- What can you do to encourage these values?

Once you've worked out your values—either on your own or with others—be confident that you have the ability share them with your children. It's also a good idea to talk about values with everyone who takes care of your child. It's important that they all know the values you would like to see in your child's daily life.

Traditions

Traditions are customs or practices that are passed down in families. Story time and bedtime routines, holidays and celebrations, and songs and games are a few of the kinds of traditions that are passed along in families. Families have different traditions. If you are parenting with a partner or sharing parenting, it's important for you to talk about and decide on the traditions and practices that will be good for your baby and family. You may want to start some traditions of your own!

Finding quality childcare

Look for childcare early!

If you are thinking about childcare for your new baby or for your older children, start looking long before you think you'll need it.

There are a limited number of childcare spaces—especially for infants—and they fill up fast. You'll need time to find out what's available where you live.

Quality childcare offers children a happy and safe place, healthy food, and lots of active learning and play.

Contact family resource centres (contact information, page 60) or Community Services (contact information, page 58) for information on quality childcare in your area in French or English.

Added info...

Here are a few things to think about when choosing childcare:

- Are the people who work there trained?
- How many children are there? How many people are there to take care of them?
- Is the place safe?
- Is it clean, bright, and welcoming?
- Does it have indoor and outdoor play spaces?
- Is there a rest area for naps?
- Do the caregivers seem to like and care about the children? Do they know the children's names?
- What do the kids do all day? Do the activities include indoor and outdoor play? Active play and quiet play? Are there lots of different toys and activities?
- Are there activities for children of different ages?
- How are parents involved? Are there regular meetings? Will you get an update about your child every day?
- What kinds of meals and snacks do the children get?
- How much does it cost? Are there subsidies?
- What kinds of rules and policies are there? For example, what if your child gets sick? What if you're late picking her up?
- Can you visit whenever you like?

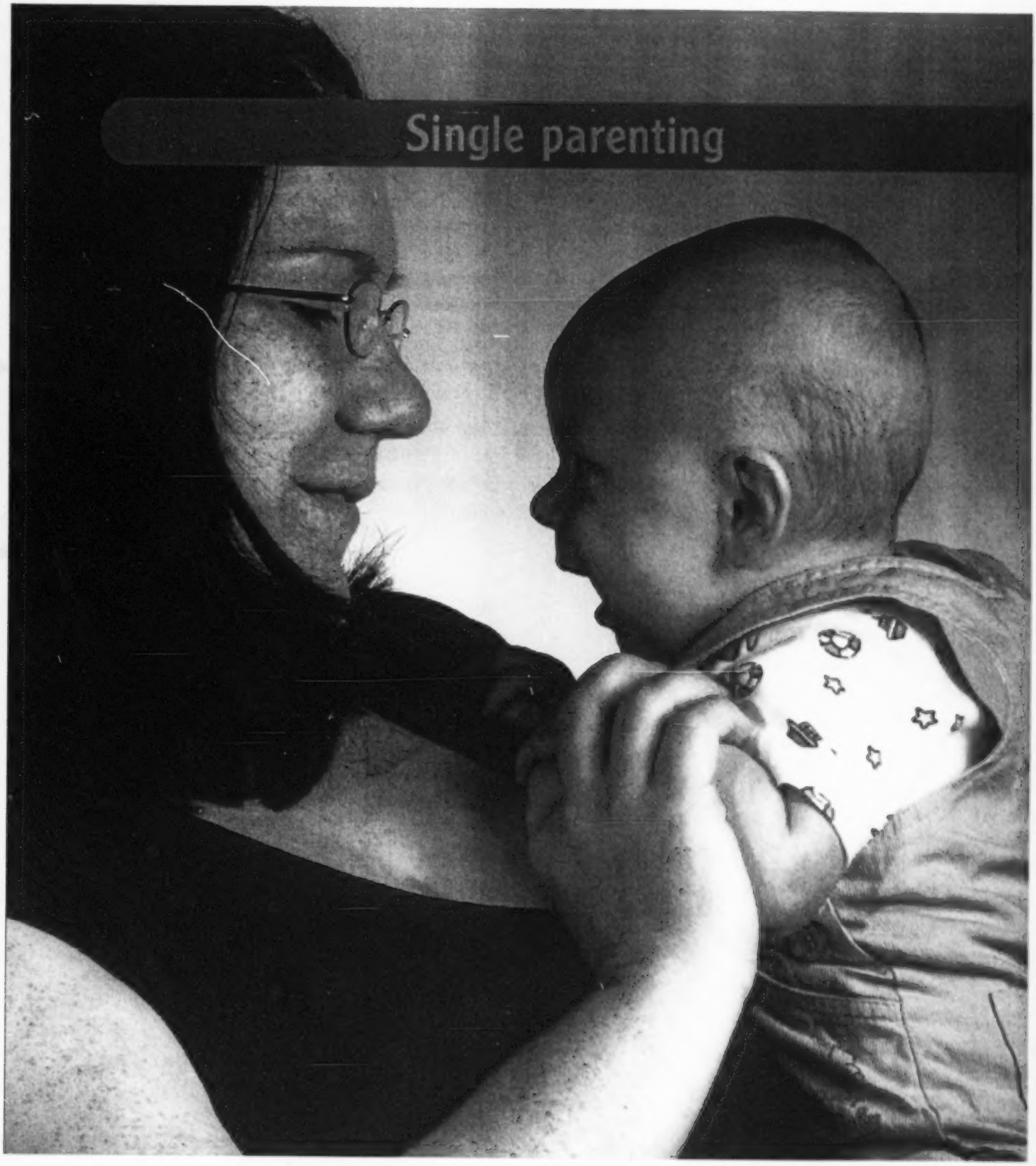
And most important of all:

Would you feel good about leaving your child here?
Would your child be happy here?

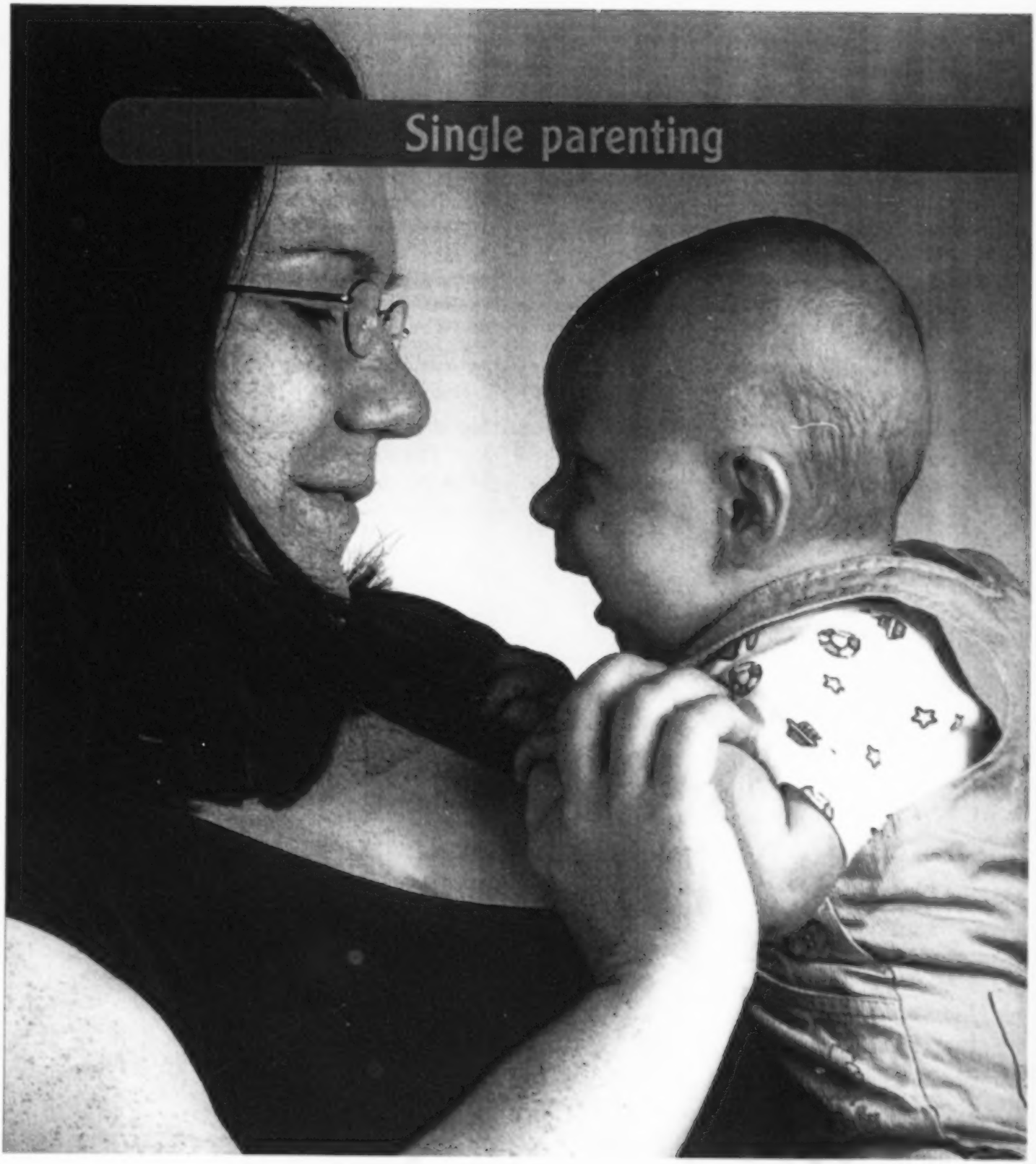
You'll find more information about finding and choosing quality childcare in the booklet, ***What is Quality Childcare?*** You can get a free copy from a Department of Community Services regional or district office (contact information, page 58), family resource centre (contact information, page 60), or licensed childcare centre.

All parents

And baby makes two 42


Single parenting

And baby makes two 42


Single parenting

And baby makes two

Being a single parent is not unusual. Many parents find themselves raising a baby without a partner.

All of the advice in this book on taking care of yourself physically and mentally is especially important for you as a single parent.

Don't forget to take some time for yourself away from your baby. Accept offers for childcare from friends and relatives you trust.

Your baby has only you to depend on, so your health and well-being are important.

- Find people to talk to.

  Sometimes just saying what's worrying you out loud can help you think things through. Having someone who will listen to you and pay attention to what you say is important for everyone. Sometimes you just need a friend, neighbour, or family member who knows and cares about you. Sometimes you need to talk to a counselor, public health nurse, social worker, or member of the clergy.

- Ask for help when you need it.

  You'll have questions and worries. All parents—single or not—need help and support sometimes. Other parents and single parents are a great source of information and support. So are your friends and family.

- Look for support in your community.

  Look for single-parent support groups, family resource centres, and parent-child play groups.

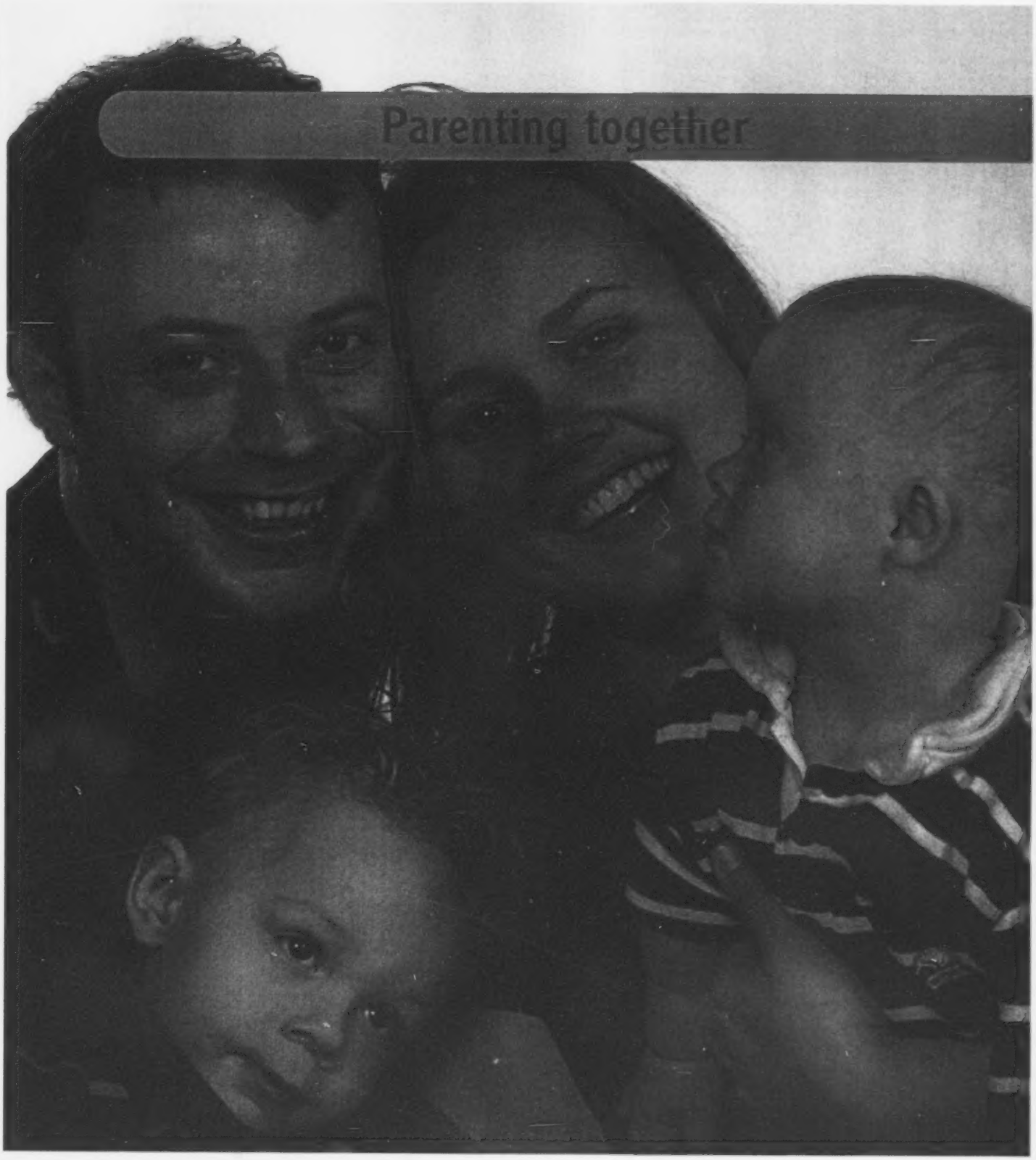
All of these people and groups—like friends, family, community groups, and family resource centres—become part of your social support network. They are the people you can depend on in hard times. They are the people who will help you when you need it, and who know you'll do the same for them.

This kind of network can make a big difference in your life and in your child's life.

Sharing parenting 46

Being a couple 47

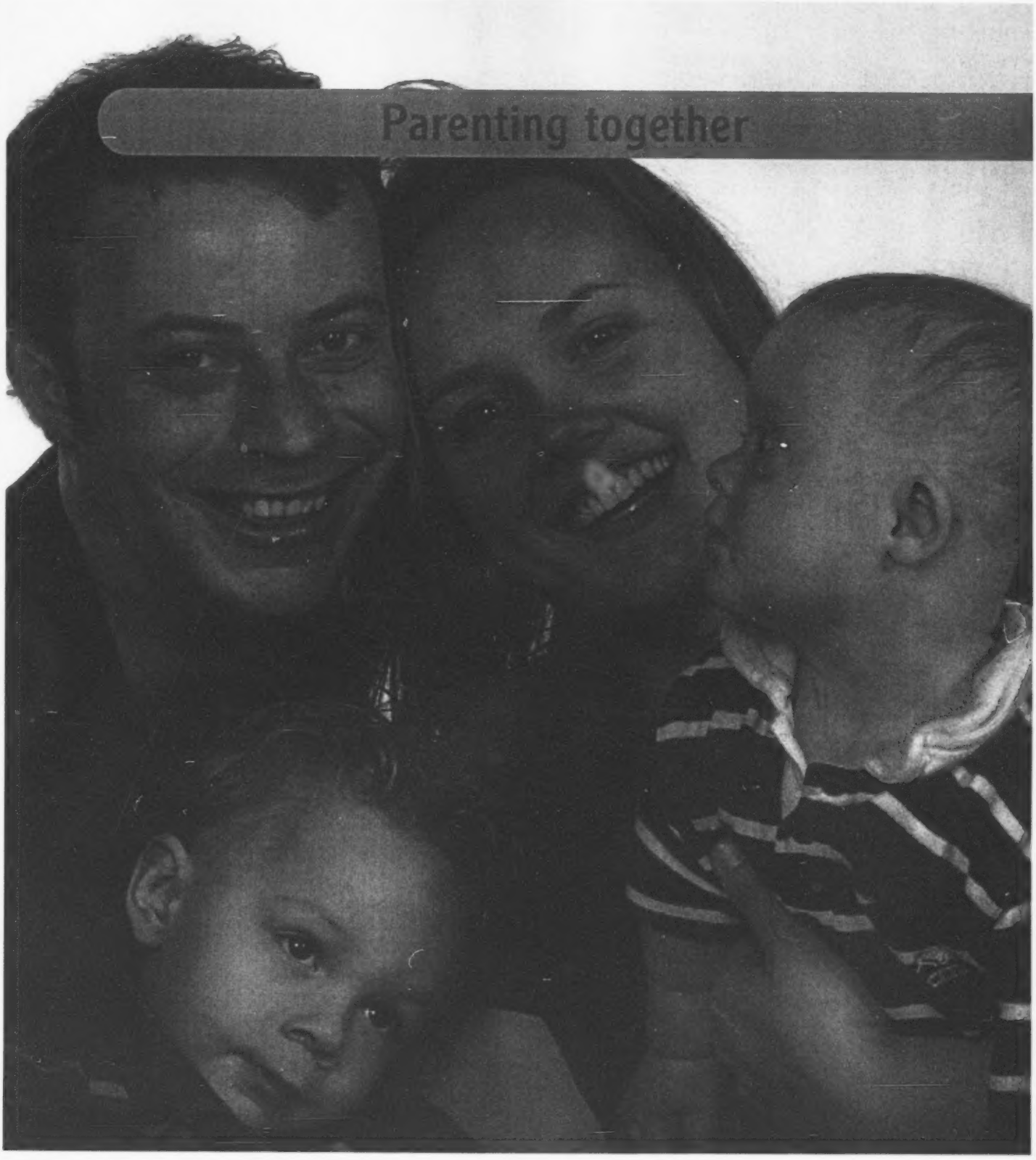
Parenting together



Sharing parenting 46

Being a couple 47

Parenting together



Sharing parenting

As parents and partners, you share many things—your love for your baby, your concern for his welfare, your desire to be good parents.

It's also important that you share in the day-to-day work of caring for your baby. When you feed, bathe, change diapers, dress, rock, and play with your baby, you're letting him know that you love him. Your baby needs to know that he can count on loving care from both parents.

Decide with your partner how to share the work of caring for a home and baby.

Every family is different, so the ways you find to share in raising your baby will be different too. These suggestions might make it a bit easier for you to work things out.

- **Moms need to give their partner a chance to learn to take care of their baby.**

  Mothers often get a head start on learning to do things like change, wash, feed, and comfort their baby. It can be hard to let go and give your partner a chance. It can be even harder to stand back and let your partner do things differently than you would. Try not to criticize. Try not to step in and take over while your partner is caring for the baby. Your baby needs you both.

- **Dads and partners need to keep trying.**

  It can be easy to back off and let mom do it when she criticizes how you change a diaper or comfort your baby. Try not to take it personally. Maybe she can do the job faster, but remind her that you need to learn, too. Tell her that you'll all be better off if both of you know how to take care of your baby.

- **It's not just baby care that parents need to share.**

  You need to share all the work of caring for each other, a home, and a baby. This means finding a way to share things like cooking, cleaning, shopping, laundry, baby care, and work outside the home. When parents find ways to share the work, they both have more time to share the fun of being a family.

- **Parents need to keep talking.**

  Talk about how you feel. Your partner can't read your mind. If you're feeling overworked, say so. If you're feeling left out, say so. Talk about how you can help and support each other.

- **Parents need to respect each other's "parenting style."**

  No two parents are alike, even when they're the parents of the same baby. Many new parents are surprised to find that they and their partner have different ideas about how to raise their baby. They may not always agree about the best way to handle things like crying or bedtimes.

  This means that they have different styles of parenting—they will do things differently and see their child in a different way.

  The key is to respect each other's parenting style and find a way to work together. It's confusing for children to get different treatment from each parent. It upsets them to hear their parents disagreeing about what to do.

Working out your differences now, when the baby is small, will help you to understand each other's point of view as your baby gets older and new issues come up. This takes time, patience, and lots of talking about what's important to each of you.

Being a couple

Most couples find that having a baby is a happy, but stressful, event. It can put a strain on any relationship. You put so much energy and effort into being good parents, there's often little left over for each other.

Your relationship with each other is important—to you and to your baby. Happy parents make happy families.

- **Talk to each other.**

  Talk about what you've done all day. Find something to laugh about together. Talk about your worries and fears. Even if you only have a few minutes a day, this will give you a chance to connect with one another.

- **Say something nice to each other every day.**

  Everyone needs to feel appreciated and loved. At least once a day, thank your partner for doing something. Tell him or her what a great job they're doing as a parent. Say, "I love you." Don't take one another for granted. Remind yourselves about what you love about each other.

- **Touch each other.**

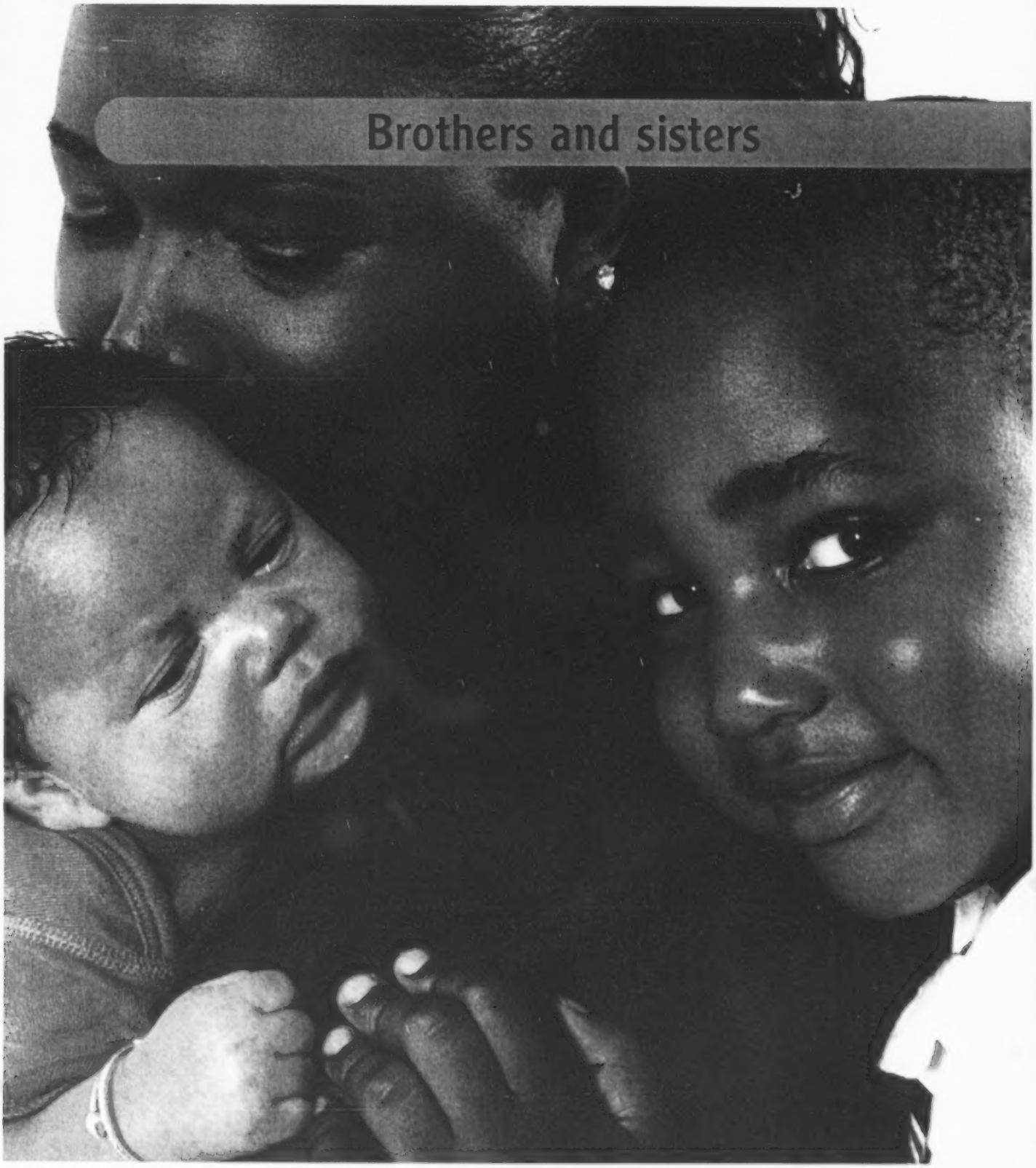
  Touch is a way of showing love. A backrub, a foot rub, a kiss, a hug, a touch on the hand all say "I love you" without words.

- **Spend time together.**

  It doesn't matter what you do, where you go, or whether you go anywhere at all. Just being together is the goal. Even an hour together can be fun.

A little baby makes big changes 50

Brothers and sisters



A little baby makes big changes

No matter what the age of your other child—or children—a new baby makes big changes in their life. It can take time for brothers and sisters to get used to it all.

Children can think, "Everyone is always too busy to play. Mommy is always tired. Everyone makes a fuss over the baby. The baby gets presents and I don't. Someone is always telling me to be quiet or I'll wake the baby. It's no fun at all!"

Bonding with a new baby takes time for brothers and sisters, just as it can take time for parents. Children who feel loved themselves will find it much easier to love their new baby.

To make it easier for other children:

- **Talk to them about babies while you're still pregnant.**

  Tell them how little and helpless babies are. Tell them about all the things they can do because they're big now. Look in libraries for children's books about new babies.

- **Bring them something when you bring the baby home.**

  This could be a small gift or a book from the library. Young children may like their own baby doll to bathe, dress, and take care of.

- **Be patient.**

  Small children may begin to act like a baby again. This is normal and will pass. Keep your children's routine as normal as possible. Give them time to get used to the changes a new baby brings. Show them that you love them just the way they are.

- **Spend some special time every day with your other children.**

  Talk to them. Listen to them. Play with them. Do something they enjoy—play a game, go for a walk, read a book. Even if it's only a few minutes, it can make a big difference to your child. Your older children need to know that you still love them and that they're still special to you. Help them feel good about themselves.

- **Let them help.**

  If your other children want to help you with the baby, let them. A child can talk to the baby while you're changing a diaper. Or tell a story while the baby is breastfeeding. Praise your children when they're being helpful. Make sure there is no chance that a brother or sister could hurt the baby, even by mistake. You can give older children little jobs around the home to help them feel important in the family.

CAUTION!

Never leave a small child alone with a baby. Children don't know how easily a baby can be hurt.

Teach your children some rules for baby safety:

- Always be very gentle.
- Only grown-ups can pick the baby up.
- Never put anything in the baby's nose, eyes, mouth, or ears.
- Don't give the baby any toys without checking with a grown-up.

Brothers and si

Grandparents are learning too 54

Grandparents

Grandparents are learning too

If this is your first baby, your parents will be learning to be grandparents while you're learning to be a parent.

You have to work out what kind of parent you'll be. They have to work out what kind of grandparents they'll be.

Some grandparents want to spend lots of time with their grandchildren. Others don't. Some want to babysit. Others don't. Some are full of advice about how you should parent. Others are happy to let you learn on your own.

If you get along well with your parents, this can be a happy time.

If you and your parents have different ideas about raising children, it can be very stressful.

Our understanding about what's healthy and safe for children has changed a lot since your parents were raising you. Many of the things you do as a parent will be different from what they did. Talk to your parents to help them understand what you are doing and why. Share your values about parenting with them.

Be polite, but be clear. You are the parents. It's up to you to decide how to care for your baby.

Added info...

Be sure that your parents know not to smoke around your children, either at home or in the car.

CAUTION!

Children should never travel in any car, truck, or van unless they are in a car seat. This includes grandparents' cars. Be sure that grandparents have the right car seat for your child's age and size and that it is properly installed in the car.

Grandparents are learning too

Grandparents

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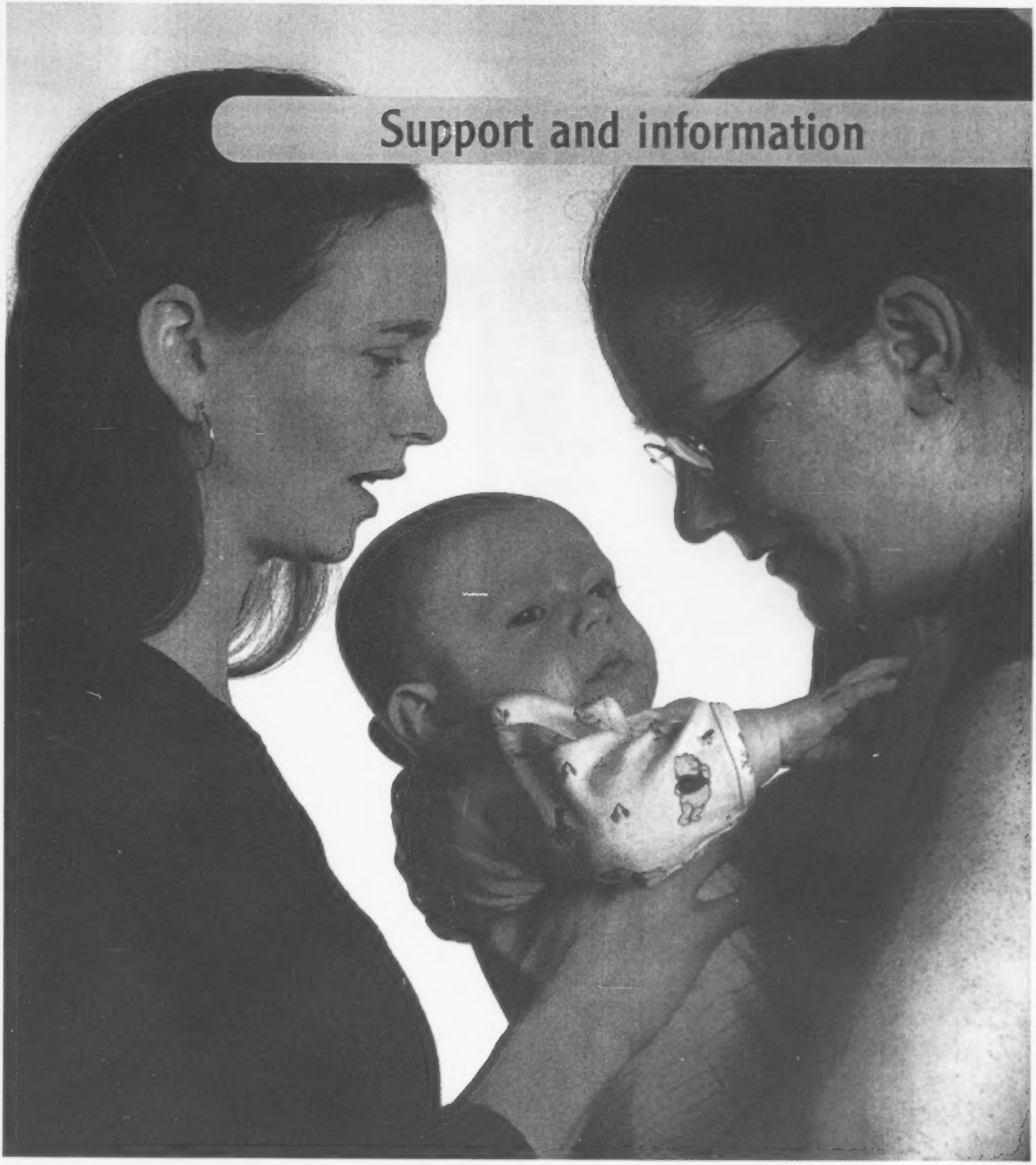

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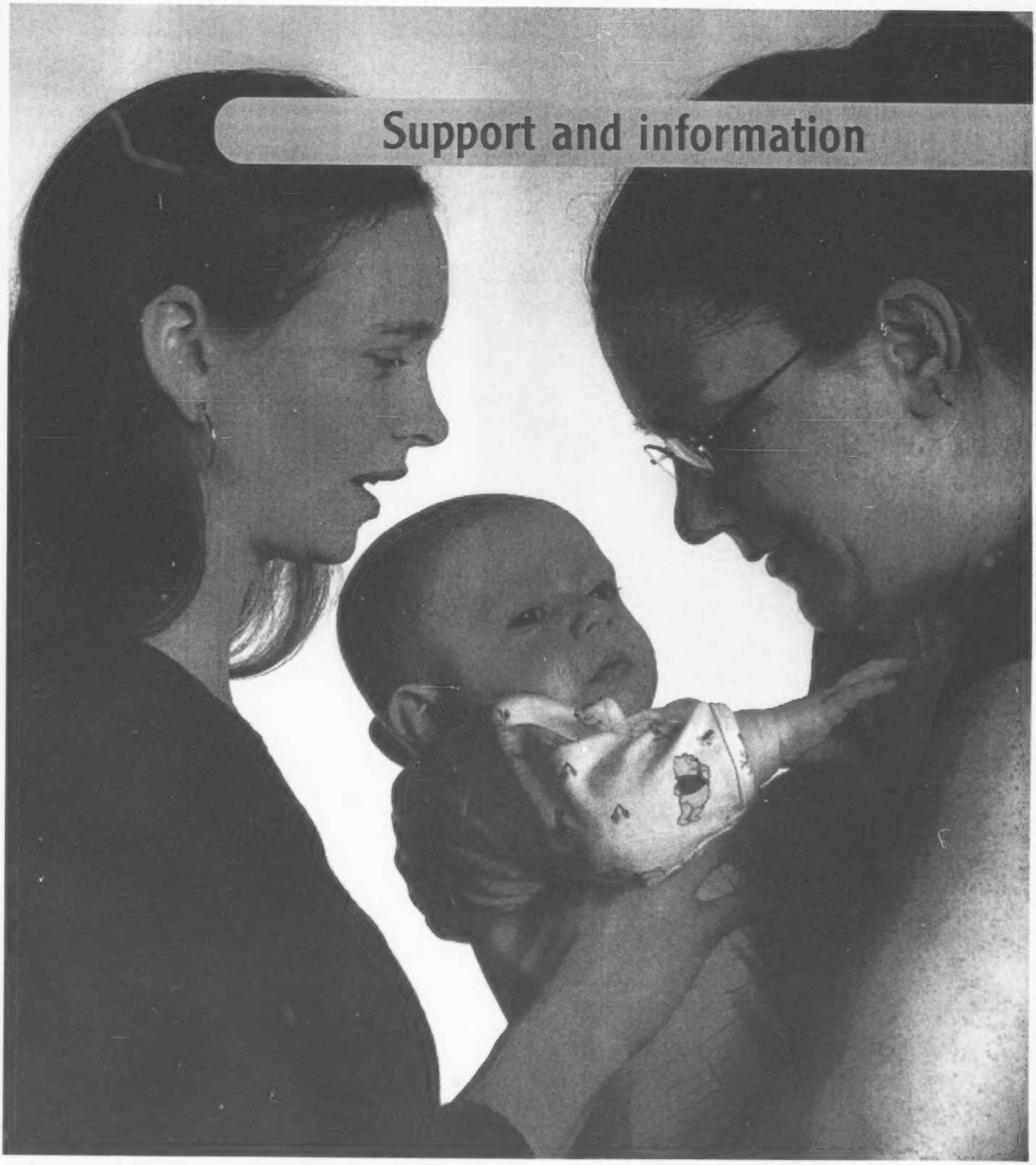

Support and information

Provincial services

Addiction Services

To find services closest to you:
www.addictionservices.ns.ca/

Child Protection Services

www.gov.ns.ca/coms/

Department of Community Services

www.gov.ns.ca/coms/

You can connect with local Community Services offices through this website. Click on "Find your local office" in the left hand column.

- Western Regional Office: 902-679-6715
- Northern Regional Office: 902-755-7023
- Central Regional Office: 902-424-4754
- Eastern Regional Office: 902-563-3302

Department of Environment and Labour

Phone: 1-877-9ENVIRO (1-877-928-8479)

Department of Health Promotion and Protection

You'll find information and resources for health promotion in Nova Scotia.
www.gov.ns.ca/hpp

District Health Authorities

The District Health Authority website is a good source of information about local programs and services.

- Annapolis Valley Health
  www.avdha.nshealth.ca/
- Cape Breton District Health Authority
  www.cbdha.nshealth.ca/
- Capital Health
  www.cdha.nshealth.ca/
- Colchester East Hants Health Authority
  www.cehha.nshealth.ca/
- Cumberland Health Authority
  www.cha.nshealth.ca/
- Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority
  www.erhb.ns.ca/
- Pictou County Health Authority
  www.pcha.nshealth.ca/
- South Shore Health
  www.ssdha.nshealth.ca/
- South West Nova Health
  www.swndha.nshealth.ca/

Mental Health Clinics

South Shore District Health Authority

- Bridgewater: 902-543-4604, Extension: 2320
- Chester: 902-275-2373
- Liverpool: 902-354-2721

South West Nova District Health Authority

- Yarmouth: 902-742-4222
- Shelburne: 902-875-4200
- Digby: 902-245-4709

Annapolis Valley District Health Authority

- Kentville: 902-679-2870
- Berwick: 902-538-3111, Extension: 143
- Middleton: 902-825-4825
- Wolfville: 902-542-2318

Colchester East Hants Health Authority

- Truro: 902-893-5526, Toll-Free: 1-800- 460-2110, Extension: 5526
- Elmsdale: 902-883-3081

Cumberland Health Authority

- Cumberland County: 902-667-3879

Pictou County Health Authority

- New Glasgow: 902-755-1137

Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority

- Antigonish: 902-863-4511
- Guysborough: 902-533-3300
- Port Hawkesbury: 902-625-3100

Cape Breton District Health Authority

- Sydney: Adult: 902-567-7730
  Child & Adolescent: 902-567-7731
- Glace Bay: 902-849-4413
- North Sydney: 902-794-8551
- New Waterford: 902-862-7195
- Inverness: 902-258-1911

Capital District Health Authority

- Lower Sackville: 902-865-3663
- Cole Harbour: 902-434-3263
- Dartmouth: 902-464-3116
- Halifax: 902-454-1400
- Windsor: 902-792-2042

IWK Health Centre

- Mental Health Program Central Referral: 902-464-4110
- Reproductive Mental Health: 902-470-8098

Public Health Services

- Amherst: 667-3319 or 1-800-767-3319
- Annapolis Royal: 532-0490
- Antigonish: 863-2743
- Arichat: 226-2944
- Baddeck: 295-2178
- Barrington Passage: 637-2430
- Berwick: 538-3700
- Bridgewater: 543-0850
- Canso: 366-2925
- Cheticamp: 224-2410
- Digby: 245-2557
- Elmsdale: 883-3500
- Glace Bay: 842-4050
- Guysborough: 533-3502
- Halifax Regional Municipality: 481-5800
- Head of Jeddore: 889-2143
- Inverness: 258-2229
- Liverpool: 354-5737
- Lunenburg: 634-4014
- Meteghan: 645-2325
- Middle Musquodoboit: 384-2370
- Middleton: 825-3385
- Neil's Harbour: 336-2295
- New Germany: 644-2710
- New Glasgow: 752-5151
- New Waterford: 862-2204
- Port Hawkesbury: 625-1693
- Sheet Harbour: 885-2470
- Shelburne: 875-2623
- Sherbrooke: 522-2212
- St Peter's: 1-888-272-0096
  (Voice mail only)
- Sydney: 563-2400
- Sydney Mines: 736-6245
- Truro: 893-5820
- Windsor: 798-2264
- Wolfville: 542-6310
- Yarmouth: 742-7141

Recreation Nova Scotia

Check this website for information about programs and services in your community.

www.recreationns.ns.ca/

Click on "Partners & Links," then on "Links to Municipal Recreation Departments."

Other resources and services

Family Resource Centres

Check the Directory of Nova Scotia Family Resource Centres for other Family Resource Centres and resources in your community: www.nscouncilfamily.org/FRC_Directory/Index.htm

Community Family Resource Centres

Amherst

- Maggie's Place (Cumberland County)
  12 Laplanche St , Amherst
  Phone: (902) 667-7250

Annapolis Valley-Hants County

- Kids Action Program
  Offers programs in several sites.
  Phone: (902) 582-1375

Antigonish

- Kids First (Antigonish County)
  27 St. Andrew Street, Antigonish
  Phone: (902) 863-3848

Bridgetown

- Family Matters (Annapolis County)
  26 Bay Rd., Suite 202, Bridgetown
  Phone: (902) 665-2622

Bridgewater

- Family Support Centre
  (Lunenburg County)
  156 York Street, Bridgewater
  Phone: (902) 543-1301

Digby

- Digby County Family Resource Centre
  19 Prince William Street, Digby
  Phone: (902) 245-6464

Guysborough

- Kids First (Guysborough County)
  105 Queen Street, Guysborough
  Phone: (902) 533-3881

Halifax Regional Municipality

- Bayers Westwood Family Resource Centre
  3499 McAlpine Avenue, Halifax
  Phone: (902) 454-9444
- Dartmouth Family Centre
  107 Albro Lake Road, Dartmouth
  Phone: (902) 464-8234
- Eastern Shore Family Resource Centre
  5228 Highway 7, Suite 203, Porters Lake Shopping Centre, Porters Lake
  Phone: 902-827-1461
  Toll-free: 1-866-8471461
- Parent N' Tot Meeting Place
  3524 Dutch Village Rd., Fairview
  Phone: (902) 443-9569

- Memory Lane Family Place
  22 Memory Lane, Lower Sackville
  Phone: (902) 864-6363
- Musquodoboit Valley Family Resource Centre
  12280 Highway 224, Middle Musquodoboit (above Haverstock Pharmacy)
  Phone: (902) 384-2794
- North End Parent Resource Centre
  5475 Uniacke Street, Halifax
  Phone: (902) 492-0133
- Parents and Children Together Resource Centre
  1114 Cole Harbour Road, Suite 102
  Dartmouth
  Phone: (902) 434-8952
- Preston and Area Family Resource Centre
  East Preston Business Centre, Suite 501
  —1900 Highway 7, East Preston
  Phone: (902)-462-7266
- Single Parent Centre
  3 Sylvia Ave, Spryfield
  Phone: (902) 479-3031

Liverpool

- Queen's County Family Resource Centre
  108 College St., Liverpool
  Phone: (902) 354-7176

New Glasgow

- Kids First (Pictou County)
  610 East River Road, New Glasgow
  Phone: (902) 755-5437

Shelburne

- King Street Family Resource Centre
  35 King Street, Shelburne
  Phone: (902) 875-3256
  Toll free: 1-800-563-3256

Sydney

- Cape Breton Family Place Resource Centre
  106 Townsend Street, Sydney
  Phone: (902) 562-5616

Truro

- Maggie's Place (Colchester County)
  129 Arthur Street, Truro
  Phone: (902) 895-0200

Windsor

- Family Resource Centre of West Hants
  War Memorial Building,
  78 Thomas Street
  Phone: (902)-798-5961

Yarmouth

- Parents' Place - Yarmouth Family Resource Centre
  34 Barnard Street, Yarmouth
  Phone: (902) 749-1718

Acadian/Francophone Family Resource Centres

Saulnierville

- La Pirouette, centre de ressources et de services à la famille, Saulnierville
  Phone: (902) 769-5854

First Nations Family Resource Centres

- Mi'kmaq Child Development Centre
  2162 Gottingen Street, Halifax
  Phone: (902) 422-7850

Military Family Resource Centres

- Halifax site
  Halifax Military Community Centre,
  Connolly Street, Windsor Park, Halifax
  Phone Reception: (902) 427-7780

- Shearwater site
  Hampton Gray Memorial Centre, just off Labrador Avenue, 12 Wing Shearwater
  Phone Reception: (902) 720-1885
- Sydney site
  The Halifax MFRC operates a part-time office in the garrison at Victoria Park in Sydney:
  1 Desbarres Street, Victoria Park, Sydney:
  Phone Reception: (902) 563-7100
  Extension: 7107

  The MFRC can be reached by telephone 24/7 at: (902) 427-7788.

Family Support Services

Adoptive and Foster Families

Adoptive parents can contact a local child welfare agency to be connected with supports such as peer mentors and support groups. You'll find contact information for child welfare agencies at: www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/documents/child_welfare_brochure.pdf

- Adoptive Parents Association of Nova Scotia
  Phone: (902) 422-2087 (9 AM to 5 PM, Monday through Friday)
  http://ns.snis.ca/search/view/?organization_id=248
- Families with Children from China (FCC) Nova Scotia Chapter
  www.FCCNS.ca
- Federation of Foster Families of Nova Scotia
  www.fosterfamilies.ns.ca/

First Nations and Aboriginal Families

- Off Reserve
  Child Help Initiative Program (CHIP)
  Native Council of Nova Scotia
  324 Abenaki Road, Truro
  Phone: (902) 895-1738
  Toll free: 1-800-565-4372
  www.ncns.ca
- On Reserve
  There are Community Health Centres on all First Nations reserves in Nova Scotia.
  - Acadia Health Centre (Gold River Reserve and Yarmouth)
    Phone: (902)-627-1245
  - Afton-Paq'tnkek Health Centre
    Phone: (902)-386-2048
  - Bear River First Nation Health Centre
    Phone: (902)-467-4197
  - Chapel Island Medical Centre
    Phone: (902)-535-2961
  - Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq
    Phone: (902)-895-6385
  - Eskasoni Health Centre
    Phone: (902)-379-3200
  - Glooscap First Nation
    Phone: (902)-684-9788
  - Indian Brook Health Centre
    Phone: (902)-758-4507
  - Membertou Wellness Clinic-Mawpltu Welo'ltimkew'kuom
    Phone: (902)-564-6466
  - Millbrook Health Centre
    Phone: (902)-895-9468
  - Pictou Landing Health Centre
    Phone: (902)-752-0085

Multiple Birth Families

- Parents of Multiple Births Association
  www.pomba.ca/
  Phone: (902) 435-3403

Newcomer/Immigrant Families

- MISA - Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association
  Newcomer Family Support Program
  7105 Chebucto Road, Suite 201, Halifax
  Tel: (902) 423-3607
  www.misa.ns.ca

Sexual Health Resources

- Cape Breton Centre for Sexual Health
  150 Bentinck St., Sydney
  Phone: (902) 539-5158
  www.capebreton.cfsh.info/
- Halifax Sexual Health Centre
  201-6009 Quinpool Rd. (2nd Floor), Halifax
  Phone: (902) 455-9656
  www.halifaxsexualhealth.ca/
- Pictou Co. Centre for Sexual Health
  503 Fredrick St., New Glasgow
  Phone: (902) 695-3366
  www.pictoucounty.cfsh.info/
- Sexual Health Centre for Cumberland County
  12 LaPlanche St., Amherst
  Phone: (902) 667-7500
  www.cumberlandcounty.cfsh.info/
- Sexual Health Centre Lunenburg County
  12 Dominion Street, Bridgewater
  Phone: (902) 543-1315
  www.lunco.cfsh.info/
- Sheet Harbour Sexual Health Centre
  Eastern Shore Memorial Hospital, Sheet Harbour
  Phone: (902) 885-2789
  www.sheetharbour.cfsh.info/
- The Red Door—Adolescent Health and Support Centre
  (Offers services to clients up to age 30)
  28 Webster Court, Kentville
  Phone: (902) 679-1411
  www.users.eastlink.ca/~thereddoor/
- Yarmouth Centre for Sexual Health
  126 Brunswick St., Yarmouth
  Phone: (902) 742-0085
  www.tricountywomenscentre.org/index_files/Page585.htm

Smoking

- Smokers Helpline
  Phone: 1-877-513-5332
- Smoke-free Around Me
  www.smokefreearoundme.ca
- Pregnets
  www.pregnets.ca/

Women's Services

Transition Houses

You can find information about family violence as well as links to transition houses across Nova Scotia on the website of The Transition House Association of Nova Scotia:
www.thans.ca/
You can also contact the Transition House Association by phone: (902) 429-7287

In Communities

Amherst

- Autumn House
  Business: (902) 667-1344
  Crisis/Helpline: (902) 667-1200
  (will accept collect calls)

Antigonish

- Naomi Society
  Business: (902) 863-3807
  Crisis lines:
  - Local: 863-3807
  - Weekend Crisis/Helpline 867-4229

Bridgewater

- Harbour House
  Business: (902) 543-3665
  Crisis/Helpline:
  Local: 543-3999
  Toll free: 1-888-543-3999

Digby and Digby County

- Juniper Digby Outreach Services
  Business: (902) 245-4789
  Crisis/Helpline: (902) 245-4789

Halifax

- Bryony House
  Business: (902) 429-9001
  Crisis/Helpline: (902) 422-7650
  (collect calls accepted)

Kentville

- Chrysalis House
  Business: (902) 679-6544
  Crisis/Helpline:
  Local: 679- 1922
  Toll free: 1-800-264-8682

New Glasgow

- Tearmann House
  Business: (902) 928-0774
  Crisis/Helpline:
  Local: 752-0132
  Toll free: 1-888-831-0330

Port Hawkesbury
(Serves Richmond County, Inverness County and Town of Port Hawkesbury)

- Leeside Transition House
  Business: (902) 625-1990
  Crisis/Helpline:
  Local: 625-2444
  Toll free: 1-800-565-3390

Sydney
(Serves Sydney, Cape Breton County and Victoria County)

- Cape Breton Transition House
  Business: (902) 562-3864
  Crisis/Helpline:
  Local: 539-2945
  Toll free: 1-800-563-2945

Truro

- Third Place
  Business: (902) 893-4844
  Crisis/Helpline:
  Local: 893-3232
  Toll free: 1-800-565-4878

Yarmouth

- Juniper House
  Business: (902) 742-4473
  Crisis/Helpline:
  Local: 742-8689
  Toll free: 1-800-266-4087

First Nations Transition Houses

Millbrook

- Mi'kmaq Family Healing Services
  Mainland Nova Scotia
  Business: (902) 893-8483
  Crisis/Helpline:
  Local: 863 8434
  Toll Free: 1-800-565-4741

Waycobah

- Waycobah Family Healing Services
  Cape Breton Island
  Business: (902) 756-2922
  Crisis/Helpline:
  Local: 756-3440
  Toll free: 1-800-565-3440

Women's Centres

Antigonish
Antigonish Women's Resource Centre
Suite 204 Kirk Place, 219 Main Street, Antigonish
Phone: (902) 863-6221

Bridgetown
The Women's Place
38 Queen Street, Bridgetown
Phone: (902) 665-5166

Halifax Regional Municipality
Dalhousie Women's Centre
6286 South Street, Halifax
Phone: (902) 494-2432

Lunenburg
Second Story Women's Centre
22 King Street, Lunenburg
Phone: (902) 543-1315

New Glasgow
Pictou County Women's Centre,
New Glasgow
Phone: (902) 755-4647

Sheet Harbour
LEA Place Women's Centre
22709 Highway #7, Sheet Harbour
Phone: (902) 885-2668

Sydney
Every Woman's Centre
102 Townsend Street, Sydney
Phone: (902) 567-1212

Truro
Central Nova Women's Resource Centre
535 Prince Street, Truro
Phone: (902) 895-4295

Yarmouth
Tri-County Women's Centre
238 Main Street, Yarmouth
Phone: (902) 742-0085

Women's Groups

Acadian/Francophone

- Fédération des Femmes Acadiennes de la Nouvelle-Écosse
  www.ffane.ca
  Phone: (902) 433-2088

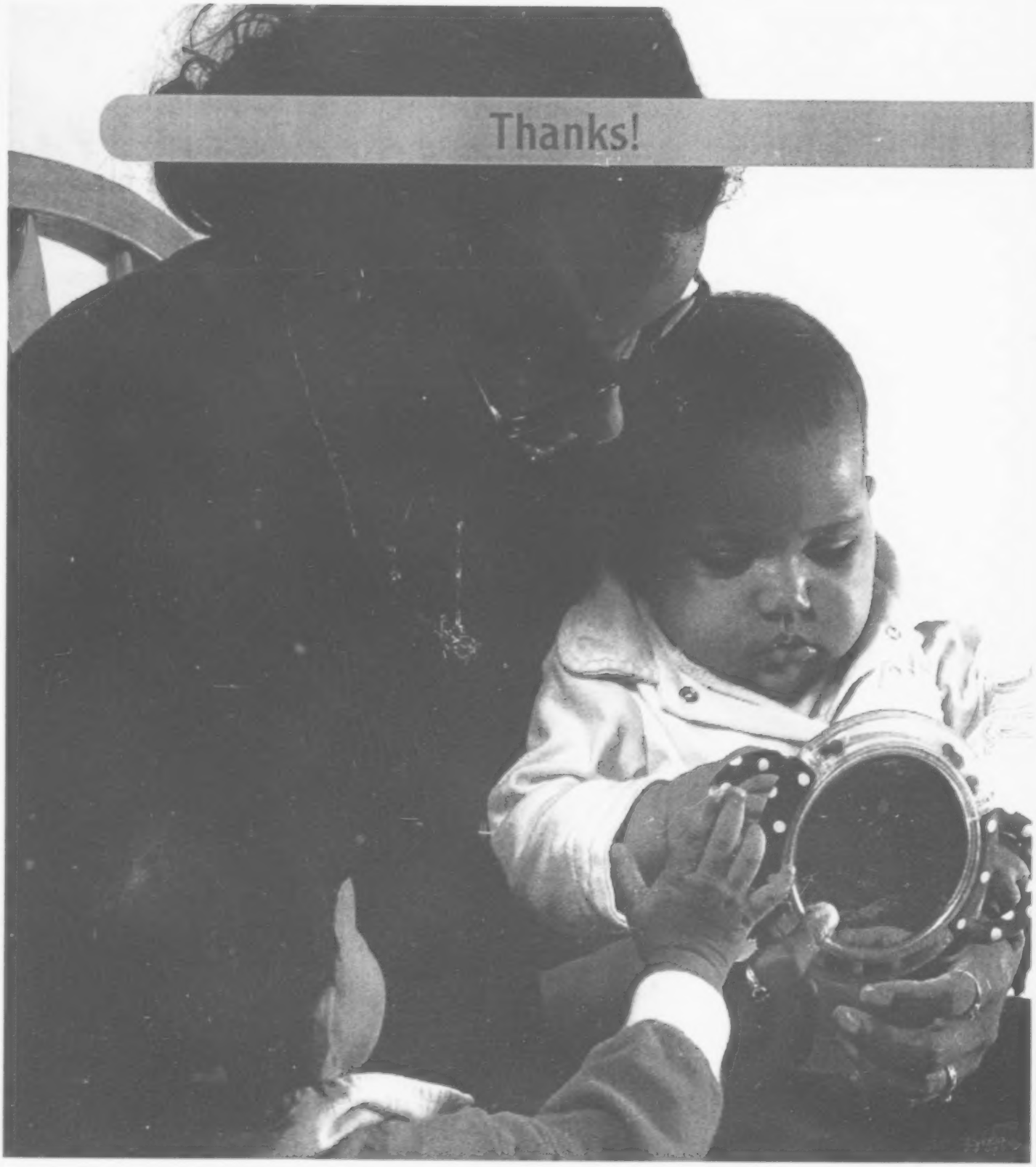
First Nations

- Nova Scotia Native Women's Association (Truro)
  Phone: (902) 893-7402
  http://nsnwa.tripod.com

Additional contacts

- Family Literacy Program Database
  To find the family literacy program nearest you:
  www.nald.ca/famlitns/survey
- Invest in Kids
  www.investinkids.ca
- Kids' Help Line
  Phone: 1-800-668-6868 *(English and French. Monday through Friday)*
  Website for 24 hour service:
  ww.kidshelpphone.ca
- La Leche League Canada
  www.llc.ca/
- Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection
  This website also has an on-line forum for parents.
  www.momsanddads.ca
- Problem Gambling Hotline
  Phone: 1-888-347-8888

Thanks! 68


Thanks!

Thanks!

The Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection acknowledges—with thanks!—the many people whose commitment and concern for Nova Scotia's mothers, babies and families have shaped this book. Your advice, insight, support, and hard work have made this book possible.

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Focus Groups

We are especially grateful to the many parents who participated in the focus groups that reviewed the various drafts of **Loving Care: Parents & Families.** Their generosity in sharing their experiences and ideas has contributed greatly to this resource.

- ESP (Extra Support for Parents)Group, Bayers Westwood Family Resource Centre, Halifax
- Cape Breton Family Place, Sydney
- Parent's Place Family Resource Centre, Yarmouth
- Kids First Family Resource Centre, Guysborough
- Dartmouth Family Centre, Dartmouth
- Maggie's Place Family Resource Centre, Truro
- Maggie's Place Family Resource Centre, Amherst
- Supportive Housing for Young Mothers Advisory Board, Halifax
- East Preston Family Resource Centre, East Preston
- Native Council of Nova Scotia, Liverpool

Expert Reviewers

- Michelle Amero, Healthy Eating Coordinator, Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection
- Heather Christian, Director of Healthy Development Responsibility Centre, Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection
- Janelle Comeau, Directrice du département des professions de la santé, Coordinatrice du Baccalauréat en service social, Université Sainte Anne
- Carolyn d'Entremont, Executive Director, Maggie's Place (Cumberland)
- Maren Dietze, Reg. Midwife (RM UK) BA
- Doris Gillis, PhD Candidate, University of Nottingham, CIHR Fellow, Associate Professor, Department Human Nutrition, St Francis Xavier University
- Dr. Krista Jangaard, Neonatal Co-director, Nova Scotia Reproductive Care Program
- Michelle LeDrew, Health Promotion Manager and National Baby Friendly Initiative assessor candidate, Public Health Services, Capital District Health Authority
- Dr. Joanne MacDonald, Clinical Director, Reproductive Mental Health, IWK Health

Services

- Steve Machat, Manager, Tobacco Control, Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection
- Hillary Marentette, Volunteer Doula Coordinator, Single Parent Centre, Spryfield
- Heather McKay, Health Promotion Specialist, Child Safety Link, IWK Health Centre
- Patricia Miller, volunteer La Leche League Canada Leader, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
- Kim Mundle, Car Seat Safety Specialist, Child Safety Link, IWK Health Centre
- Dan Steeves, Nicotine Specialist, Capital Addiction Services
- Dr. Gaynor Watson-Creed, Medical Officer of Health, Public Health Services, Capital District Health Authority
- Dr. Tracey Williams, Pediatric physician, Colchester East Hants District Health Authority

Photo Volunteers

Ashley and Joshawa Vidito

Emily, Jamie and Jordyn O'Neill

Felecia, Michael, Eric and Ian Outhouse

GeAnne, Elijah and KaiMilla Nelson

Hsiu-Fen "Joy" Lin, Ke-Jia "Dylan" Chang, Ke-Shi "Melanie" Chang, and Fang-Cheng "Frank" Chang.

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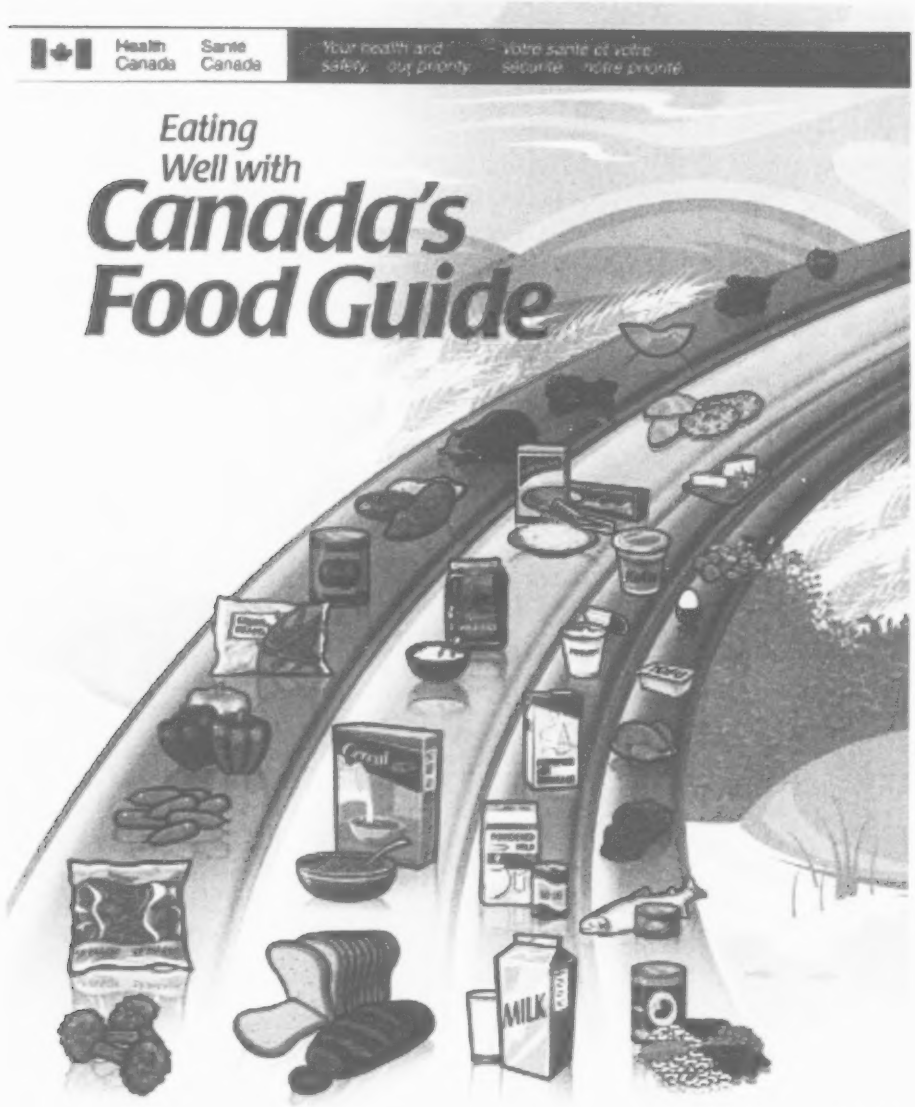
Health Canada Santé Canada

Your health and safety... our priority. Votre santé et votre sécurité... notre priorité.

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide



Canada

Recommended Number of Food Guide Servings per Day

	Children			Teens		Adults			
Age in Years	2-3	4-8	9-13	14-18		19-50		51+	
Sex	Girls and Boys			Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males
Vegetables and Fruit	4	5	6	7	8	7-8	8-10	7	7
Grain Products	3	4	6	6	7	6-7	8	6	7
Milk and Alternatives	2	2	3-4	3-4	3-4	2	2	3	3
Meat and Alternatives	1	1	1-2	2	3	2	3	2	3

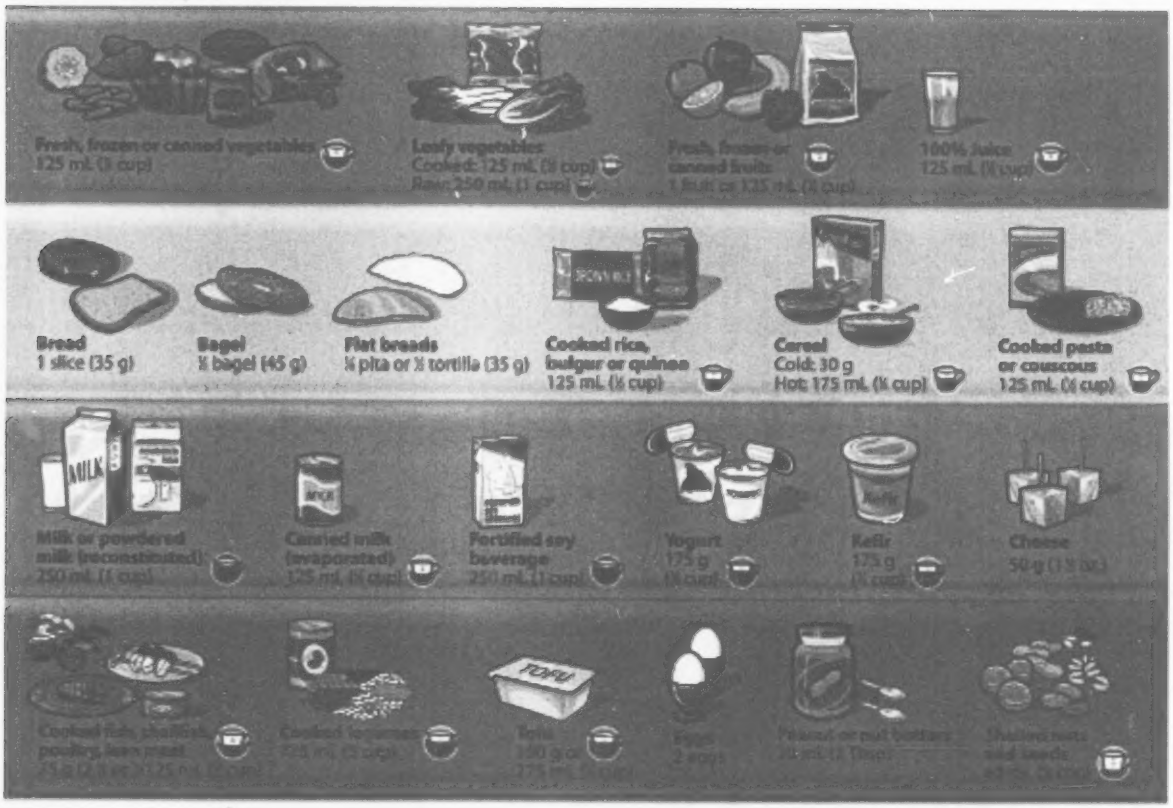
The chart above shows how many Food Guide Servings you need from each of the four food groups every day.

Having the amount and type of food recommended and following the tips in *Canada's Food Guide* will help:

- Meet your needs for vitamins, minerals and other nutrients.
- Reduce your risk of obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, certain types of cancer and osteoporosis.
- Contribute to your overall health and vitality.

What is One Food Guide Serving?

Look at the examples below.



Oils and Fats

- Include a small amount – 30 to 45 mL (2 to 3 Tbsp) – of unsaturated fat each day. This includes oil used for cooking, salad dressings, margarine and mayonnaise.
- Use vegetable oils such as canola, olive and soybean.
- Choose soft margarines that are low in saturated and trans fats.
- Limit butter, hard margarine, lard and shortening.

Make each Food Guide Serving count...

wherever you are – at home, at school, at work or when eating out!

- Eat at least one dark green and one orange vegetable each day.
  - Go to dark green vegetables such as broccoli, romaine lettuce and spinach.
  - Go for orange vegetables such as carrots, sweet potatoes and winter squash.
- **Choose vegetables and fruit prepared with little or no added fat, sugar or salt.**
  - Enjoy vegetables cooked without added fat or stir-fried instead of deep fried.
- Have vegetables and fruits more often than juice.

- **Make at least half of your grain products whole grain each day.**
  - Eat a variety of whole grains such as barley, brown rice, oats, quinoa and wild rice.
  - Enjoy whole grain breads, oatmeal or whole wheat pasta.
- **Choose grain products that are lower in fat, sugar or salt.**
  - Compare the Nutrition Facts table on labels to make wise choices.
  - Enjoy the true taste of grain products. When adding sauces or spreads, use small amounts.

- Drink skim, 1%, or 2% milk each day.
  - Have 500 mL (2 cups) of milk every day for adequate vitamin D.
  - Drink fortified soy beverages if you do not drink milk.
- Select lower fat milk alternatives.
  - Compare the Nutrition Facts table on yogurts or cheeses to make wise choices.

- Have meat alternatives more often, such as beans, lentils and tofu.
- Eat at least two Food Guide Servings of fish each week.*
  - Choose fish or shellfish cooked without added fat.
- Select lean meat and alternatives prepared with little or no added fat or salt.
  - Trim the fat off meat. Choose the extra lean.
  - Remove skin from poultry before or after cooking.
  - Choose lower fat cooking methods, like baking or poaching instead of frying.

Enjoy a variety of foods from the four food groups.

Satisfy your thirst with water!

Drink water regularly. It's a calorie-free way to quench your thirst. Drink more water in hot weather or when you are very active.

* Health Canada provides advice for limiting exposure to mercury from certain types of fish. Refer to www.healthcanada.gc.ca for the latest information

Advice for different ages and stages...

Children

Following *Canada's Food Guide* helps children grow and thrive.

Young children have small appetites and need calories for growth and development.

- Serve small nutritious meals and snacks each day.
- Do not restrict nutritious foods because of their fat content. Offer a variety of foods from the four food groups.
- Most of all... be a good role model.

Women of childbearing age

All women who could become pregnant and those who are pregnant or breastfeeding need a multivitamin containing folic acid every day. Pregnant women need to ensure that their multivitamin also contains iron. A health care professional can help you find the multivitamin that's right for you.

Pregnant and breastfeeding women need more calories. Include an extra 2 to 3 Food Guide Servings each day.

Here are two examples:

- Have fruit and yogurt for a snack, or
- Have an extra slice of toast at breakfast and an extra glass of milk at supper.

Men and women over 50

The need for vitamin D increases after the age of 50.

In addition to following *Canada's Food Guide*, everyone over the age of 50 should take a daily vitamin D supplement of 10 µg (400 IU).

How do I count Food Guide Servings in a meal?

Here is an example:

Vegetable and beef stir-fry with rice, a glass of milk and an apple for dessert

250 mL (1 cup) mixed broccoli, carrot and sweet red pepper	=	2 **Vegetables and Fruit** Food Guide Servings
75 g (2 ½ oz.) lean beef	=	1 **Meat and Alternatives** Food Guide Serving
250 mL (1 cup) brown rice	=	2 **Grain Products** Food Guide Servings
5 mL (1 tsp) canola oil	=	part of your **Oils and Fats** intake for the day
250 mL (1 cup) 1% milk	=	1 **Milk and Alternatives** Food Guide Serving
1 apple	=	1 **Vegetables and Fruit** Food Guide Serving

Eat well and be active today and every day!

The benefits of eating well and being active include:

- Better overall health.
- Lower risk of disease.
- A healthy body weight.
- Feeling and looking better.
- More energy.
- Stronger muscles and bones.

Be active

To be active every day is a step towards better health and a healthy body weight.

Canada's Physical Activity Guide recommends building 30 to 60 minutes of moderate physical activity into daily life for adults and at least 90 minutes a day for children and youth. You don't have to do it all at once. Add it up in periods of at least 10 minutes at a time for adults and five minutes at a time for children and youth.

Start slowly and build up.

Eat well

Another important step towards better health and a healthy body weight is to follow *Canada's Food Guide* by:

- Eating the recommended amount and type of food each day.
- Limiting foods and beverages high in calories, fat, sugar or salt (sodium) such as cakes and pastries, chocolate and candies, cookies and granola bars, doughnuts and muffins, ice cream and frozen desserts, french fries, potato chips, nachos and other salty snacks, alcohol, fruit flavoured drinks, soft drinks, sports and energy drinks, and sweetened hot or cold drinks.

Read the label

- Compare the Nutrition Facts table on food labels to choose products that contain less fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sugar and sodium.
- Keep in mind that the calories and nutrients listed are for the amount of food found at the top of the Nutrition Facts table.

Nutrition Facts

Per 0 mL (0 g)

Amount	% Daily Value
Calories 0	
Fat 0 g	0 %
Saturates 0 g	0 %
+ Trans 0 g	
Cholesterol 0 mg	
Sodium 0 mg	0 %
Carbohydrate 0 g	0 %
Fibre 0 g	0 %
Sugars 0 g	
Protein 0 g	
Vitamin A 0 %	Vitamin C 0 %
Calcium 0 %	Iron 0 %

Limit trans fat

When a Nutrition Facts table is not available, ask for nutrition information to choose foods lower in trans and saturated fats.

Take a step today...

- ✓ Have breakfast every day. It may help control your hunger later in the day.
- ✓ Walk wherever you can – get off the bus early, use the stairs.
- ✓ Benefit from eating vegetables and fruit at all meals and as snacks.
- ✓ Spend less time being inactive such as watching TV or playing computer games.
- ✓ Request nutrition information about menu items when eating out to help you make healthier choices.
- ✓ Enjoy eating with family and friends!
- ✓ Take time to eat and savour every bite!

For more information, interactive tools, or additional copies visit Canada's Food Guide on-line at: www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide

or contact:

Publications
Health Canada
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K9
E-Mail: publications@hc-sc.gc.ca
Tel.: 1-866-225-0709
Fax: (613) 941-5366
TTY: 1-800-267-1245

Également disponible en français sous le titre : Bien manger avec le Guide alimentaire canadien

This publication can be made available on request on diskette, large print, audio-cassette and braille.

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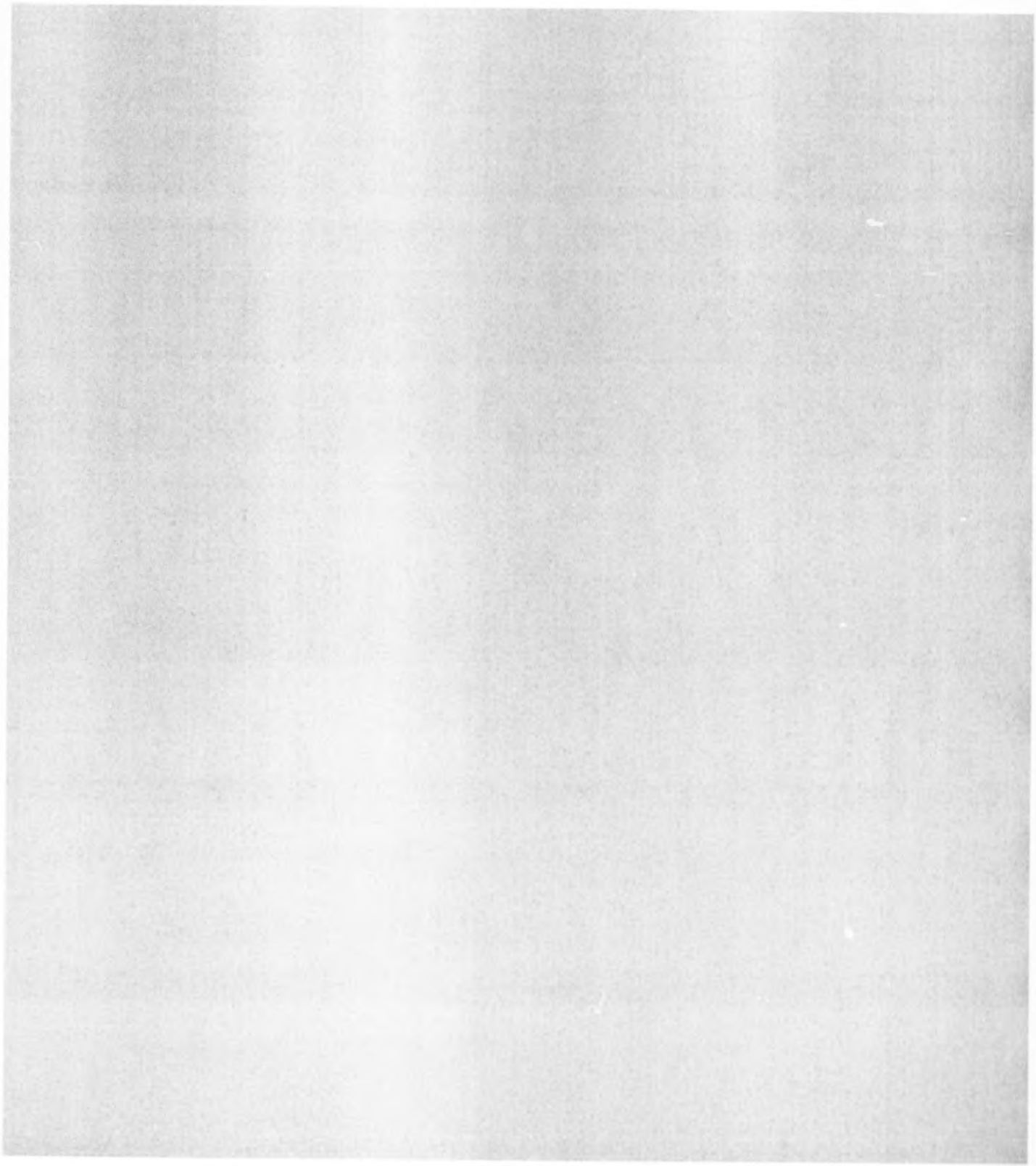

Loving Care

Parents and Families

NOVA SCOTIA

Health Promotion
and Protection

Public Health Services

www.gov.ns.ca/HPP

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